

Russia, Egypt concerned about peace process

CAIRO (AFP) — Russia shares Egyptian concern over the future of the troubled Middle East peace process, a special envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin said here on Sunday. Boris Kousyk, speaking after a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, said Russia "entirely supports all of the efforts and positions taken by Egypt in relation to the peace process and shares its concerns about this process."

Jordan Times

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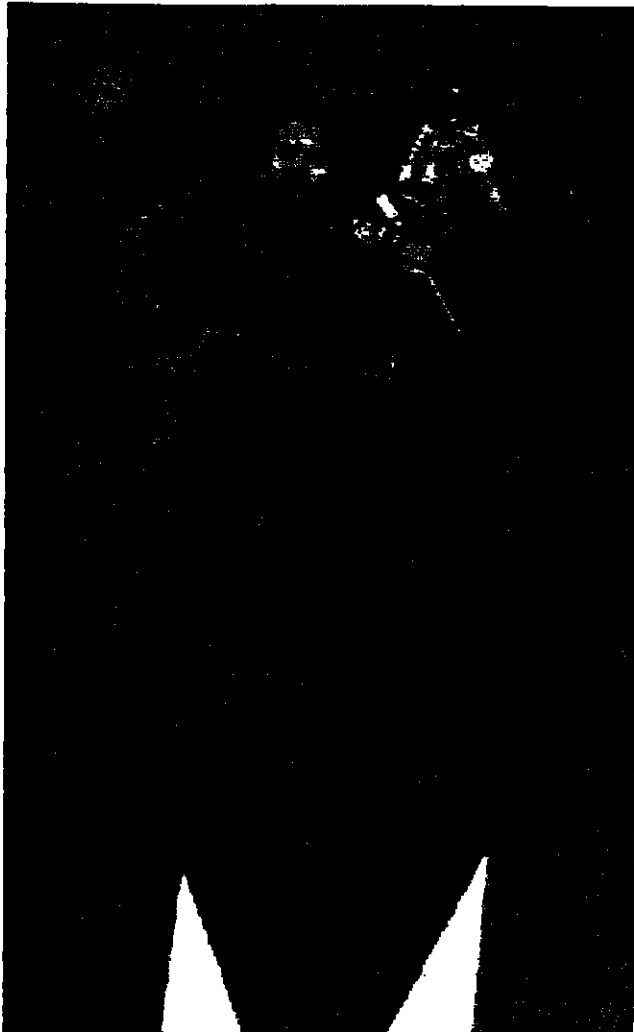
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Arafat visits Hebron and tells settlers
Palestinians do not want confrontation

Palestinian leader gets tumultuous welcome in West Bank town

HEBRON (Agencies) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, greeted by 60,000 ecstatic Palestinians celebrating the takeover of Hebron after three decades of Israeli occupation, had conciliatory words Sunday for the Jewish settlers who remain in the heart of the West Bank town.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Sunday addresses a large crowd in Hebron (AFP photo)

King reiterates complete support for Palestinians, congratulates Arafat
Abbas hopes for Israeli commitment to accord

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday reiterated Jordan's support of the Palestinian people and their efforts to regain their rights on their national soil.

Speaking at a meeting in the Royal Court with Mahmoud Abbas, a senior member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the King stressed that Jordan will continue its support to the peace process until comprehensive and just peace has been achieved.

At the meeting, which was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Mr. Abbas briefed King Hussein on the latest developments in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. He voiced Palestinians' appreciation of the King's continued support for the peace process and gratitude for his latest efforts to help the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators come to an agreement on the redeployment of Israeli forces in the Hebron area.

Present at the meeting also were Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Omar Khajil.

Earlier the King telephoned Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Hebron congratulating him on taking control of the West Bank town in implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and reiterating Jordan's continued support for the Palestinian people.

Mr. Kabariti also held a separate meeting with Mr. Abbas and reviewed the latest situation in Hebron and coordination between Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Mr. Abbas later described the meeting as cordial, warm and useful and said Jordan and the PNA were determined to ensure full coordination at the highest level.

"In our negotiations with Israel we have succeeded in linking the question of Hebron with the other outstanding issues that would be discussed at a later stage with the Israeli side," said Mr. Abbas.

He said that soon after the redeployment in Hebron negotiators will start implementing the subsequent stages in the interim autonomy agreement and the issues connected with the final settlement.

"We have concluded the Hebron accord in good faith and we hope that the Israelis will reciprocate," added Mr. Abbas. Putting the accord to the test provides the best proof of each side's real intentions, he added.

"We are fully committed to the accord in the full sense of the word and we hope that the Israelis will be equally committed," he said.



His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday receives senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official Mohammad Abbas (Petra photo)

Jordan to pay \$19.1 per barrel for Iraqi oil in 1997 agreement
\$70m to be adjusted against Iraqi debts

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Iraq have agreed to an across-the-board price of \$19.10 per barrel for Iraqi oil to be supplied to the Kingdom during fiscal 1997 under an agreement signed in Baghdad on Saturday, official sources said Sunday.

The net increase in Jordan's actual oil bill, given that the Kingdom would get Iraqi oil worth \$300 million free of cost, will be around \$70 million, and this amount will be adjusted against Baghdad's debts to Amman, according to the sources.

Under the agreements, which also included a trade protocol, Iraq will supply 4.5 million tonnes of crude oil and derivatives (25 million barrels of crude and seven million barrels of derivatives) to Jordan during fiscal 1997.

The agreement of \$19.1 per barrel is across the board, covers both crude oil as well as refined oil products (derivatives), said a source, who, like others who spoke to the Jordan Times, did not want to be identified.

In return, Jordan will supply goods and services worth \$255 million to Iraq during the same period under the trade protocol.

reflecting an increase of \$35 million from the 1996 protocol.

However, it does not mean additional exports this year, because an agreement on the additional \$35 million was reached last year under an understanding that this would be reflected in the 1997 protocol, the sources explained.

In real terms, the agreements meant that Jordan would receive Iraqi oil worth \$625 million in 1997. The free-of-cost supply will account for \$300 million, leaving \$325 million. This would be settled by the \$255 million protocol and the rest — \$70 million — will be adjusted as partial payment of Iraq's debts to Jordan, estimated by officials here as \$1.3 billion.

Jordan paid \$15.25 per barrel of Iraqi oil and received \$250 million worth of free Iraqi oil supply in 1996.

The official Iraqi News Agency said Saturday Iraqi President Saddam Hussein met with the Jordanian Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb, and Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas.

During the meeting, the Iraqi leader "ordered an increase in the oil grant to the brotherly Jordanian people to \$300 million

from last year's \$250 million," the agency said.

The agency also said the Jordanian ministers delivered a message from His Majesty King Hussein to President Saddam, on "bilateral relations and means of enhancing them."

In Amman, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti held talks Saturday evening with Iraqi Deputy Premier Tareq Aziz, who was on his way home from a visit to France, official sources said.

"The talks focused on bilateral relations, and Mr. Kabariti said political differences should not be a hurdle in inter-Arab economic ties," said an official.

Mr. Abul Ragheb and Dr. Dabbas were on their way home on Sunday.

Before his departure, Dr. Dabbas was quoted as saying by Baghdad's Al Jumhuriya newspaper that the renewed oil accord reflected an increase of seven per cent in Jordan's imports of Iraqi oil and oil products.

"Jordan obtained a seven per cent increase in the quantities of crude and petroleum products exported by Iraq," the minister told Al Jumhuriya.

Trade between Iraq and

Settlers could become Palestinian subjects — minister

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A minister in Israel's right-wing coalition government said Sunday that Jewish settlers living in the occupied territories could become Palestinian citizens following a final peace accord.

"It could well be that the settlers could then become subjects of (Palestinian President Yasser) Arafat with special identity cards," said Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy of the National Religious Party (NRP).

Mr. Levy, speaking at a conference in a school near Tel Aviv, said settlers could be given the cards after Israel and the Palestinians agree on a final status for the West Bank and

Gaza Strip — a decision due by May 1999. The minister's comments represent the first time that the NRP, positioned firmly on the far right of the political spectrum, has even hinted at accepting Palestinian sovereignty.

However, Mr. Levy also called for a new settlement drive to counter-balance the effect of the Israeli government's decision to hand over most of the West Bank town of Hebron to Palestinian control last week.

The NRP is considered the party closest to the settler movement, and it voted against the Hebron accord in parliament.

Crown Prince calls for sound utilisation of funds

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday called for directing funds and investments where they are needed most. Speaking during an iftar banquet for representatives of various organisations, Prince Hassan said human development is a top priority that should incorporate responding to and supporting people's needs and aspirations. He called for reviving social fact-finding missions to under-privileged areas in order to accurately pinpoint their needs. Prince Hassan said making people aware of the importance of rationalising energy and water consumption is a field job that should be undertaken by counselling centres to be established in the Kingdom.

Palestinian guard killed in Lebanon camp

AIN HILWEH, Lebanon (AFP) — The bodyguard of a leading member of a Palestinian group hostile to Yasser Arafat's peace deal with Israel has been murdered in this southern Lebanon refugee camp, Palestinian security sources said Sunday. Ahmad Ayyoub, 30, was shot dead by a masked man Saturday night in one of the narrow lanes in 'Ain Hilweh, on the outskirts of the southern port of Sidon, the sources said. Ayyoub was the bodyguard of Khalid Al Shayeb, a member of a Fatah faction which opposed Mr. Arafat's policies.

U.S. has relieved Israel of its Golan commitment — report

Haaretz reports September letter from Christopher

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The U.S. has secretly relieved Israel of a tacit commitment by the previous Israeli Labour government to return the occupied Golan Heights to Syria, the Haaretz newspaper reported Sunday.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher sent Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a letter on Sept. 18 last year declaring the commitment "null and void" under international law, said the paper.

The Israeli-Syrian agreement in principle, accepting an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan under a future peace accord, was brokered after long negotiations in Washington and was dubbed the "non-paper" because it was never signed.

After the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Nov. 1995, his successor Shimon Peres was surprised to discover the existence of the agreement, but he agreed to go along with it.

However, right-wing Likud leader Netanyahu won elections in May last year on a hardline platform pledging never to give up the Golan.

At Mr. Netanyahu's insistence, the Americans agreed to back his position after discussions in Washington with his advisor

Dore Gold, Haaretz reported. In an interview in Saturday's edition of the French daily Le Figaro, Mr. Netanyahu reaffirmed his tough stance on the Golan.

"The Golan Heights are absolutely not negotiable (...) we need to keep the Golan for strategic, historical and economic reasons," Mr. Netanyahu said.

"A fourth of the water resources of Israel come from the Golan Heights. One can live without oil, but no one can live without water," he added.

The Israeli premier said that following a period of tension "we are moving ahead slowly but surely towards resuming peace talks" with Syria, but he added that "the Syrians have still not accepted our proposals to restart the talks."

Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai on Sunday called on Syria, in an interview reported in the Yediot Aharonot newspaper, "to return to the negotiating table." He said last week's Hebron accord between Israel and the Palestinians had created an "atmosphere of progress."

However, Syria's official press has fiercely condemned the accord, with the Tishrin daily on Sunday calling it a "timebomb" and Al Thawra saying the deal

"threatened the entire Middle East peace process." The paper pointed to scuffles between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers that broke out Friday in Hebron's vegetable market just hours after the city was handed over to Palestinian municipal control.

It said the incident would make "the Arabs of Hebron question the future, for as long as these settlements are maintained they will remain time-bombs that can explode at any minute," said the paper.

Abu Khajil freed on bail of JD100,000

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Tawfiq Abu Khajil, the former honorary consul for Sri Lanka now on trial charged with selling babies of Sri Lankan maids, has been freed on JD100,000 bail, lawyers said Sunday.

The lawyers said the court granted the bail in consideration of Mr. Abu Khajil's ill-health.

Mr. Abu Khajil, 55, a prominent businessman, is known to suffer from cardiac problems. He was arrested in March 1996 in connection with the sale of illegitimate babies born to Sri Lankan maids. The arrest and a subsequent raid on the premises of the honorary consulate followed the interception of a Dutch couple carrying a baby that they said they had purchased from the consulate for \$8,000. The couple were found to be carrying forged documents related to the baby.

Repeated bids for Mr. Abu Khajil's bail were turned down by the court and he was put on trial late last year.

In addition to the charge of illegal sale of babies,

Sudan rebels claim killing 150 troops in ambush in push for strategic dam

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudanese rebels claimed Sunday that their forces ambushed and killed at least 150 government troops trying to block their advance towards a strategic dam in eastern Sudan.

The fighting took place at dawn Sunday north of Al Kail, 80 kilometres southeast of the Roseires Dam in eastern Sudan, rebel spokesmen in Egypt and Eritrea said. The dam provides Khartoum with 80 per cent of its electricity.

The government had no immediate comment on the claim.

The rebels were building on their easy capture of Maban, 600 kilometres southeast of the capital, Khartoum, said Yasser Arman, spokesman for the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

"We sent the Maban garrison a warning beforehand and the government troops fled from the area," Mr. Arman said in Asmara, Eritrea. "This means that we have secured the rear guard of our forces, so we can now concentrate on attacking" the dam.

Nearly 14 years of civil war in Africa's largest country has pitted north against south, Muslim against Christian,

black African against Arab African. More than 1.3 million people have died in the fighting and resulting famines.

Fighting has now spread 700 kilometres along Sudan's eastern border, and continues on a separate front in southern Sudan.

The Roseires Dam spans the Blue Nile and supplies the capital with 80 per cent of its power. Rebels want to shut it down to cripple the government and economy in Khartoum.

Rebels moving north from Maban and west from the Ethiopian border were within 80 kilometres of the dam, which is 470 kilometres southeast of Khartoum, Mr. Arman said.

The Sudanese government says rebels are being backed by Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers, a charge both countries deny.

Sudan's government has declared a holy war against the rebels. It ordered a general mobilisation Monday, and has sent busloads of soldiers, university students and women to the eastern front.

Mr. Arman said about 180 soldiers from the popular defence force, the military wing of the National Islamic

Front (NIF) deserted in the eastern town of Menza. Government officials could not be reached for comment.

"The government recruited these people by force, so they don't feel any allegiance toward it. The morale in the Sudanese army is very low. We are also doing political work in the area to persuade people to join us," Mr. Arman said.

John Garang, the U.S.-educated rebel leader, has called on government troops to desert and join the opposition alliance.

After years of disagreements, the Asmara-based National Democratic Alliance, made up mostly of Muslims from northern Sudan, recently joined forces with the SPLA, the largest group of rebels in the mostly Christian and animist south.

The two groups have fought together in the rebels' successful eastern campaign.

Mohammad Osman Al Mirghany, president of the alliance, said in Cairo on Sunday the group will intensify its fight with the goal of triggering an uprising in Sudan which would lead to the over-

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Cyprus police disperse protesters

NICOSIA (R) — Police said they used tear-gas on Sunday to disperse Greek-Cypriots trying to prevent diplomats from crossing into the Turkish-held area of the divided island through a United Nations checkpoint in the capital.

U.N. spokesman Waldemar Rokusewski said two members of the peacekeeping force also were assaulted by demonstrators who sprayed a caustic substance in their faces.

"They have been medically examined and they are okay," he said. "This incident shall be protested at a political and a police level." Demonstrators denied attacking any U.N. personnel.

Five people were taken to hospital with breathing problems after police used tear-gas to disperse the up to 50 people who gathered at the U.N.-controlled Ledra Palace checkpoint in central Nicosia. They were later discharged.

Demonstrators wanted to block the checkpoint to protest what they said was the refusal of the Turkish Cypriot administration in the north of the island to allow two Maronite Christians into the southern government-controlled areas for medical treatment.

Some thumped on the bonnets of two cars belonging to diplomats of the British high commission and the U.S. embassy when they appeared at the checkpoint to cross over, police said.

"They blocked off the road and some lay in the street to prevent the diplomatic cars from crossing into the occupied areas," police spokesman Glafcos Xenos told Reuters.



Palestinians cheer as the helicopter carrying President Yasser Arafat is about to land in Hebron on Sunday on Mr. Arafat's first visit to the West Bank town after Israel handed most of it to Palestinian control last week (Reuters photo)

Arafat faces tough challenge in Hebron

HEBRON (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Sunday celebrated his takeover of Hebron, but he now faces the tough task of imposing his will over the stronghold of his Islamist opponents.

Some Hebron residents hold no more love for the Palestinian leader and his security forces than for their former occupiers.

"The (Hebron) agreement is betrayal and Arafat is the biggest traitor," spat Abu Samir, 46, referring to the deal reached on Wednesday between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators for handing over the city.

"It doesn't matter, him or the Israelis, they won't know peace in Hebron," he said, refusing to give his full name.

"Arafat has justified the presence of the Jews in Hebron. He has allowed the occupiers to remain in the

Abrahimi Mosque. God will have his revenge on them all," he said.

Under the Hebron agreement, Israeli troops remain in the eastern fifth of the city around enclaves where 450 Jewish settlers live and keep control of the Ibrahim Mosque, containing the tomb of the Prophet Abraham and revered by both Muslims and Jews.

Hebron is a stronghold for the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which vehemently oppose Mr. Arafat's peace deals with the Israelis and have been victims of a harsh crackdown by Palestinian police for the past year.

Moreover, the highly traditional city, controlled by strong clans, has historically been a thorn in the side of a series of rulers.

"Arafat won't be able to control Hebronites, they're

tough and stand strong against all outsiders. I'd say about half the people support him and half hate him," said Khalil Abu Zafar, 26, a resident of Hebron's old city.

"But he's a clever man. He knows how to convince people and bring them over to his side either by sweet-talk or by the whip," he said.

Mr. Arafat has succeeded to a large extent in drawing the fangs of Hamas across the West Bank and Gaza Strip both with the stick — by arresting hundreds of its members over the past year — and the carrot — by later releasing many and allowing them limited rallies in Gaza.

In Hebron, pressure is particularly high to prevent attacks by Palestinian militants against the Jewish settlers, sure to bring a hard response from Israeli soldiers.

Mayor Mustapha Natshe has vowed that Palestinian security "will not allow anyone, including opposition groups, to attack Jewish settlers or the army."

"Everyone, supporters and opposition alike, must respect the law," Palestinian security chief Jabril Rajoub told a crowd of thousands at celebrations for the handover on Saturday.

But an official in the Palestinian interior ministry said: "Arafat and his officials have been working hard with the heads of the big families in Hebron over the past months to ensure there are no problems in the city."

"That has always been the president's speciality. I don't think he'll have any problems in Hebron," he added.

Iraqi agents looking for arms in Britain — report

LONDON (Agencies) — Iraqi agents are shopping to buy British military hardware to restore Iraq's military capacity and several British firms have received orders made on behalf of Baghdad, the Sunday Times reported.

The paper said the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) was recently alerted to the existence of orders placed by Iraq with four English firms by means of individuals or companies acting as go-betweens.

The DTI denied on Saturday night having any knowledge of suspicious orders and urged anyone having evidence of them to come forward with the information.

"If there are Iraqis round the country trying to make deals with British companies, if these companies are entering into negotiations with Iraqi agents — talking hypothetically — what they are doing is illegal," a DTI spokesman said.

A leader of the Matrix-Churchill machine-tools company said it had been approached by people seeking to acquire components which could be used for both military and civilian purposes.

The Sunday Times, citing British businessmen who recently visited Iraq, said Iraq was working hard to restore its military strength and would be capable, if necessary within a month, to produce scud missiles, which the U.N. has banned it from possessing.

The Sunday Times newspaper reported Iraqi agents had approached companies in London, Birmingham, Southampton and Reading and quoted the DTI as saying it had received reports of suspicious orders from several companies.

The newspaper claimed Iraq was only a month away from being able to start work on Scud missiles.

Keith Bailey, chief executive of machine toolmaker BSA Tools, was quoted as saying his company had been approached five or six times. "I referred all of those approaches to the DTI," he said.

In October the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) in charge of ridding Baghdad of mass destruction weapons said Iraq was still hiding small but highly significant quantities of banned arms.

Iraq needs a clean bill of health from UNSCOM before the embargo on Iraqi oil exports can be lifted entirely, Iraq has been under crippling trade sanctions since its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Iraqi asylum-seekers detained in Sydney

SYDNEY (AFP) — Four illegal immigrants who claimed to be Iraqi refugees when found on an island off Australia last week are to be detained here while their asylum claims are investigated, officials said Sunday.

The four men were flown here on Sunday from Thursday Island, where they had been held in immigration custody.

They were found on Wednesday on the remote island of Saibai, in the northernmost part of Torres Strait near the Papua New Guinea mainland.

A government deputy has questioned their claims to being bona fide refugees and called Sunday for their deportation if they proved to be no more than illegal immigrants.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Immigration said the four would be held in an immigration detention centre in Sydney while their claims for asylum and reasons for leaving Iraq were assessed.

She said further comment

might jeopardise their claims.

It is believed Immigration Department officials were attempting to confirm their identities and establish how the men arrived in Australian territory.

Liberal backbencher Warren Entsch said the four should be deported if they were simply trying to enter Australia by the back door. "They have travelled through a hell of a lot of countries to get here and if they are legitimate refugees I would suggest it was much closer to go to Europe than it is to travel all this way to Australia," he said.

"It seems rather strange to me that they have concealed their presence until they find themselves on Australian soil."

"To me, that suggests that they have deliberately set out to get here and probably by attempting to get in through the back door and I think, if that proves to be the case, then they should be tossed out," Mr. Entsch said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinian guard killed in Lebanon camp

AIN HILWEH, Lebanon (AFP) — The bodyguard of a leading member of a Palestinian group hostile to Yasser Arafat's peace deal with Israel has been murdered in this southern Lebanon refugee camp, Palestinian security sources said Sunday. Ahmad Ayyoub, 30, was shot dead by a masked man Saturday night in one of the narrow lanes in 'Ain Hilweh, on the outskirts of the southern port of Sidon, the sources said. Ayyoub was the bodyguard of Khalid Al Shayeb, a member of a Fatah faction which opposed Mr. Arafat's policies. He was the third Palestinian to be murdered in the camp this year, the security sources said. The other two killings were not considered political, but Ayyoub's murder was "an attempt to sow instability in the camp," one source said. Camp leaders called on the various factions to meet on Sunday to discuss security issues in 'Ain Hilweh, home to some 90,000 Palestinians.

Former Palestinian informer sues Israel

HAIFA (AFP) — A Palestinian informer for Israel's security service is suing the state for \$900,000 for suffering caused when he was forced to abandon his home in the Gaza Strip after the Palestinians took control, the Jerusalem Post reported on Sunday. The unidentified 48-year-old Palestinian said he worked with Israel's internal security service Shin Bet for 20 years, "greatly contributing to the state's security and endangering himself and his family," the daily said. In his claim lodged with the district court in Haifa, northern Israel, the man said he was forced to abandon about \$450,000 of property when the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) took control of the Gaza Strip. He is claiming another \$450,000 "for mental anguish caused by the move and for future lost income because of his difficulty in finding a job in Israel," the English-language newspaper reported. The former informer said Shin Bet agents promised that if he was forced to leave Gaza, the security service would provide for him and his family. But they are now living in a "wretched" apartment and having to survive on \$250 a month, he claimed.

Saudi airlines to resume Beirut flights

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabian Airlines will resume flights to Beirut in February after a halt of nearly 15 years due to the civil war in Lebanon, a Saudi official was quoted on Sunday as saying. Saudi newspapers quoted Abdul Hamid Al Jahdali, acting assistant general manager for international regions at the airline, as saying flights — four a week from the main cities of Riyadh and Jeddah — will resume on February 1. He said Saudi Arabian Airlines had stopped flying to Beirut in 1982 due to the country's 1975-1990 civil war. Several international airlines have resumed flights to Beirut's airport since the end of the war.

UAE to spend at least \$6 billion on arms by 2000

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) intends to spend between \$6 billion and \$7 billion on arms purchases over the next four years under plans to bolster its defence, officials said Sunday.

France and other Western arms producers are vying to grab a share of the contracts which require weapon suppliers to invest in the UAE under its offset programmes, they said.

"There are plans to spend between \$6 billion and \$7 billion until the year 2000 to buy new weapons as part of efforts to strengthen our defence capability," offset chief Amin Badraddin told reporters.

"The arms include fighter aircraft, warships and helicopters and they all will be subject to offset conditions which require suppliers to invest here,"

Mr. Badraddin declined to

give details of acquisitions but military sources said the UAE was seeking to buy up to 80 strike jets and frigates.

The planned purchase follows the UAE's biggest tank deal with GIAT industries of France in 1993 which involved 436 advanced combat Leclerc tanks worth around \$3.9 billion.

The new arms deals will raise the UAE's total defence spending to more than \$10 billion since the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Other Gulf Arab states have announced plans to beef up their armed forces after they were threatened by Iraqi invasion troops.

The UAE has been locked in an island dispute with Iran but has ruled out resorting to force to recover the three islands, which control the strategic Hormuz Strait through which one fifth of the

world's oil supplies pass.

The UAE and its Gulf Arab allies have repeatedly voiced fears about Iran's armament programmes, which involved the purchase of long-range missiles and three Russian Kilo-class submarines. Two submarines were delivered three years ago while the third cruised into Iran's territorial waters on Sunday.

But Tehran has scoffed at such fears, saying the oil-rich Gulf Arab states were spending much more on arms supplies.

Defence sources said the UAE's planned arms purchases meant its military expenditure would top \$1 billion a year in a decade. The sum accounts for nearly 10 per cent of its total annual income.

"The sum is large compared to the country's population. But when you look at it in the

long-term, you will find it logical," Mr. Badraddin said. "You have to be strong enough to safeguard your accomplishments in future and this means those weapons are for defensive rather than offensive purposes."

The deputy director of the offset office, Mohammad Al Mazrui, said the new weapons deals would largely benefit the UAE economy as suppliers would be required to invest in civilian projects.

He said such projects must yield a value added of up to 60 per cent of the total value of the arms deal over a specific period of time.

The UAE joined Saudi Arabia in introducing offset programmes several years ago in a bid to attract foreign capital, mainly in industry and technology.

It has so far attracted investments of nearly 950 million

dinars (\$259 million), covering 18 projects in industry and services. They include a shipyard, drug production, transport services, solar power, aircraft maintenance, environment protection, clothes and a technology centre.

Mr. Badraddin said the planned arms packages would sharply boost offset commitments by Western weapon suppliers as they will involve projects that could have a value added of up to \$4 billion in 10 years.

Current offset projects would yield between three billion and four billion dirhams (\$817 million to \$1.08 billion) in six years, he added.

"We believe the offset is a good investment as it attracts capital, boosts the gross domestic product and contributes to economic diversification," said Mr. Badraddin.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts 0/13
Jordan Valley 08/19

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 11, Aqaba 21 Humidity
readings: Amman 58 per cent,
Aqaba 34 per cent.

USEFUL
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ramzi Mzawi 894788
Dr. Khalid Abdo 657129
Dr. Bassam Karadsheh 759200

Dr. Khaled Ma'addi 661144
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Tamrah 25080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Samir Al Lawzi 989601
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 771521
Highway Police 834302
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Dept 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
J. Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Co. 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
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AL-AHLI, ABDALI 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and
Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)96732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

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JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

13:05 Min Al-Hadi Al-Moham-
madi Cartoon
13:30 French Programmes
14:00 Deepwater Haven
15:00 Feature Film — Trans-
sylvania

16:50 Call for Prayer and Iftar
17:30 I Love Lucy
18:00 Magazine Science
— Cinq Sur Cinq

19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Roseanne
20:02 Documentary on Ramadan
20:30 Baby Ion 5 (Science Ficti-
on)

21:10 Drama — Extreme (Pilot)
22:00 News in English
22:25 Journey Into Islam
23:00 Under Suspicion
23:50 Mini Series —
"Switched at Birth" (Pt II)
01:15 Ramadan Talks

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 Fajr
06:31 (Sunrise) Duha
11:46 Dhuhr
14:38 'Asr
17:02 Maghreb
18:23 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweithel. Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Depart-
ment of Meteorology
Unstable weather conditions will
prevail with a chance for scattered
showers and winds southeasterly
moderate to active. In Aqaba, skies
will be partly cloudy, winds
northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 02/12
Aqaba 09/20

Assemblies of God Church Tel.



HRH Princess Basma
fare Society School
by the Queen Alia
Ramadan charity co

Court up- convicted

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Court of Cassation last week affirmed a ruling by the Amman Criminal Court to execute a 24-year-old man for the murder of a physician in August 1996 in the Thaa' Al Ali area.

Abdul Fatah Mustafa was sentenced to death by the Criminal Court on Nov. 10, 1996 after being declared guilty of murder and attempted rape of Inan Yassin, who worked for Islamic Hospital Amman, on Aug. 1996 at the Fard Housing Complex Thaa' Al Ali.

The prosecution charged that the convicted former guard maintained a relationship with the victim, had murdered him with the intention of sexually assaulting

Al Ama- of st-

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al-Amal Cancer Centre Sunday announced the partial opening of certain diagnostic and surgical units.

According to Abdul Khatib, head of a national task force responsible for the specialised facility, the clinic dedicated to examining women patients' breast and reproductive organs is now open to the public.

Dr. Khatib said once the operation theatres, recovery room and part of the intensive care unit also ready to accommodate patients.

In a statement to Jordan News Agency, Dr. Khatib said the centre has worked out a "comprehensive" program which includes a campaign to raise funds to cover the cost of treatment, adding:

"We are not simply

mass, but living tissue which changes according to a variety of factors such as age, hormones, levels, diet, exercise patterns, etc."

Rawhi Shishlawi, consultant orthopaedist, Amman said.

Two types of microscopic cells involved in this process he explained.

The first osteoblasts or bone builders which construct new tissue if the

80 %

By Nadia Mukhlis

of the Jordan Times

AMMAN — According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, about 80 per cent of the world's population doesn't consume enough calcium to stay healthy.

Current research demonstrates that bones are not simply mass, but living tissue which changes according to a variety of factors such as age, hormones, levels, diet, exercise patterns, etc."

Rawhi Shishlawi, consultant orthopaedist, Amman said.

Two types of microscopic cells involved in this process he explained. The first osteoblasts or bone builders which construct new tissue if the



HRH Princess Basma Sunday meets with children at the Martyrs' Families Welfare Society School in Marka. Princess Basma's visit to the school was organised by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) as part of a greater Ramadan charity campaign (Petra photo)

Court upholds death penalty for man convicted of physician's murder

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Court of Cassation last week affirmed a ruling by the Amman Criminal Court to execute a 24-year-old man for the murder of a physician in August 1996 in the Tla'a Al Ali area of Amman.

Abdul Fatah Mustafa was sentenced to death by the Criminal Court on Nov. 10, 1996 after being declared guilty of the murder and attempted rape of Iman Yassin, 26, who worked for the Islamic Hospital in Amman, on Aug. 11, 1996 at the Fardous Housing Complex in Tla'a Al Ali.

The prosecution had charged that the convicted, a former guard and maintenance worker at the complex, had monitored the victim apartment with the intention of sexually assaulting her.

"even if he had to kill her."

But in October, Mr. Mustafa, who confessed and retracted the crime to the authorities, re-affirmed in court that his intent was not to kill the woman but was rather taken by surprise.

"When I entered the flat, she caught me by surprise and began to scream so I put my hands around her neck to stop her from screaming and she fell," Mr. Mustafa told the court then.

According to court documents, on the night of Aug. 11, Mr. Mustafa consumed alcohol, broke into Dr. Yassin's apartment and attempted to rape her.

A struggle ensued between the two and the woman started screaming when Mr. Mustafa placed his hands on her neck and strangled her, the court said.

Amnesty International, had issued an appeal in December on Mr. Mustafa's behalf and three other people who were sentenced to death and urged activists to appeal to His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and relevant authorities to commute these sentences.

The case will be referred to the chief attorney general, the minister of justice, the prime minister and finally the King for endorsement of the verdict.

Last year a total of 23 people were sentenced to death by the Criminal Court. In the same year ten people were executed in the Kingdom for various crimes. In 1995, eight people were put to death in Jordan.

Human rights organisation.

Al Amal announces partial opening of surgical, diagnostic units

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Amal Cancer Centre Sunday announced the partial opening of certain diagnostic and surgical units.

According to Abdullah Khatib, head of a national task force responsible for the specialised facility, a clinic dedicated to examining women patients for breast and reproductive organ cancers is now open to the public.

Dr. Khatib said one of five operation theatres, a recovery room and part of the intensive care unit are also ready to accommodate patients.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Khatib said the centre has worked out an executive programme which includes a campaign to raise funds to cover the cost of cancer treatment, adding that

3000 to 4000 new cases of cancer are diagnosed in the Kingdom every year.

The campaign concept is designed like an insurance plan and thus calls for the annual collection of JD 10 from each family wishing to be covered, Dr. Khatib explained.

He said the centre estimates that it could raise at least JD 10 million annually through such a drive.

He said the Ministry of Education has agreed to promote the collection of funds through schools by sending students home with messages to their families inviting them to subscribe to the plan.

He said the centre hopes to send out to 200,000 invitations in the first stage.

up another programme to encourage those more privileged to contribute to covering the cost of cancer treatment of underprivileged patients.

The 120-bed in-patient facility is equipped for highly advanced therapies such as bone marrow transplants as well as adult and paediatric chemotherapy. The centre is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation.

The 30,000 square metre centre includes outpatient clinics and radio-diagnostic, radio-therapy and nuclear medicine departments.

The national task force collected \$15 million from different fund-raising campaigns to build the centre which is located near the University of Jordan.

Islamic Action magazine indefinitely suspended

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "Islamic Action," the magazine of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), will not appear on bookshop shelves and kiosks next month, announced Islamic Action Editor-in-Chief Bassam Ammouh.

Stressing that the publication "was not discontinued, but rather suspended," he added that Islamic Action will be back in circulation in "some months."

According to Dr. Ammouh, the decision to suspend the publication was taken by IAF executives to "conduct studies on methods of improving the magazine in both lay-out and contents."

The staff of Islamic Action (so far comprising three people) is also expected to be "reshuffled and increased," Dr. Ammouh said, confessing that, "for the time being," he cannot affirm whether or not he will be reappointed to his position when the publication is resumed.

However, he maintained that the suspension was "neither financially nor politically motivated" and he strongly rejected a report carried last Monday by the Arabic weekly Al Majd alleging that "Islamic Action" has been discontinued due to disruptive influences towards the Islamic Front's sense of solidarity and its common goal "ostensibly caused by some articles published therein."

Registered at the Ministry of Interior, in December 1992 as an IAF official organ, "Islamic Action" was later joined by another Islamic publication, the Arabic weekly "Sabeel," issued by the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Muslim Brotherhood's political arm, the IAF, is the strongest opposition party in the Kingdom, counting 15 members in the 80-seat Lower House of Parliament, more than one thousand registered members and a number of active supporters which unofficial statistics estimate as nearing 5,000.

Jordan to participate in Romanian trade fairs

AMMAN (Petra) — In talks held between Romanian Ambassador to Jordan Ioan Agaficioia and Chairman of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce Haidar Murad, agreement was reached regarding Jordanian participation in Bucharest-based trade exhibitions.

These are deemed necessary to orient the Romanian public regarding Jordanian national goods.

Mr. Murad affirmed that both sides agreed to further bilateral trade delegation exchanges to explore marketing national products.

Mr. Agaficioia praised the quality of Jordanian products and maintained a large demand for these exports to the Romanian markets.

He stated that an increase of exports would help adjust the balance of trade between the two countries.

Mr. Murad described the balance of trade between Romania and Jordan as heavily in favour of the former and affirmed that Jordan exported JD 5 million worth of products in 1995 and imported JD 21 million worth of Romanian goods.

He also said that in the first 11 months of 1996, Jordan exported JD 2 million worth of products to Romania while importing JD 32 million worth of Romanian goods.

Mr. Murad suggested joint projects as a method of adjusting the balance of trade and cementing trade links between the two countries.

The Romanian ambassador noted that 2,500 Jordanian firms are currently operating in Romania which employ a cumulative 8,000 Jordanian workers.

The Kingdom signed an agreement with Romania in 1995, Mr. Murad said, to boost economic development as well as trade delegation visits between the two.

WHAT'S GOING ON

PLAY
* Play (in Arabic) entitled "Total Fiasco" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

CONCERT
* Performance by artists from Irbid governorate at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILM
* "La vie et rien d'autre" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

IAF deputy urges Lower House to denounce 'aggression' against Sudan

Ammarin accuses Ministry of Culture of 'intellectual repression'

By Tareq Momani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — During Parliament's regular session Sunday, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) called on the House to issue a statement condemning what it described as Eritrean and Ethiopian aggression against Sudan and urged the Arab World to rally to the support of Khartoum.

IAF Parliamentary Bloc Spokesman Hamzeh Mansour charged that "Ethiopian and Eritrean forces, backed by Israel and the United States, have been waging war on Sudan in a bid to destabilise the country, loot its wealth and take control of the River Nile which serves as a lifeline for Egypt and Sudan."

"We must send a brotherly gesture to help Sudan protect its independence and soil in the face of such aggression which threatens the Arab nation as a whole," Mr. Mansour maintained.

"It is incumbent on the House to issue a strong condemnation of this aggression and call on Arab and Muslim nations to rally behind Sudan in the face of external threats," he added.

He said that the House should follow the government's example in denouncing the offensive and in urging Arab parliaments to take appropriate action to immediately bring its end.

"We call on Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti to meet with the Sudanese ambassador and learn about Sudanese political, medical and military needs as Jordan can offer support in certain areas, notably medical," he added.

Mr. Mansour maintained that the Jordanian Armed Forces, which in

the past has supported Palestine and Syria, should play an active role in protecting Sudan's Arab and Islamic identity.

Karak Deputy Nazih Ammarin voiced discontent as to a recent decision by the Ministry of Culture banning the organisation of any seminar or lecture without prior ministry approval.

He maintained that this order is reminiscent of the days of martial law and only serves to harm the democratic process.

Dr. Ammarin accused the Ministry of Culture of taking steps towards the repression of intellectual activities and cited the ministry's recent dissolution of the Karak Cultural Centre Administrative Committee as an example of repressive policy-making.

In response, Minister of Culture Ahmad Qudah denied that the centre's committee was dissolved but stated that the ministry has decided to form a special task force entrusted with arranging for new general assembly elections in 60 days as, he said, some board members had attempted to arrange illegal elections in violation of the centre's internal regulations.

Irbid Deputy Ahmad Kofahi criticised the Ministry of Supply for its decision to deny certain people, including those who have professional and trade licences or possess mobile telephones, coupons entitling them to buy basic foodstuffs at government subsidised prices.

Calling the decision capricious, Kofahi stated that regulations concerning coupon distribution should be re-examined.

He further maintained that the ministry ought to procure a manner to facilitate the distribution of such coupons and described as a public

insult long queues of people waiting for hours to receive their coupons.

Aqaba Deputy Bader Riati avowed that the ship "Monte Carlo" which docked in Aqaba on Dec. 24 of last year as part of general plans to encourage tourism has been used for gambling, strip-teases and massage sessions as an adjunct to its disco, bar and sauna.

The ship was designed in the capacity of a floating restaurant but reports concerning its actual activities speak otherwise, Riati maintained.

Such activities constitute a religious and moral offence to the nation as well as a violation of the Jordanian legislation and constitution, Mr. Riati said.

He demanded that the government end these practices.

The House later finalised a debate regarding the Balqa Applied University Draft Law and endorsed its provisions subsequent to the introduction of some amendments.

One of the amendments authorises the Council of Higher Education to terminate employment for anyone working in the university.

A Royal Decree issued last September appointed Prince Ghazi as the university president leading a 15-member commission.

The university is stipulated as a financially and administratively independent entity, has the right to buy or sell property and real estate, to offer or receive donations and conclude contracts in a manner deemed appropriate and correspondent to its activities.

The university's main task is to graduate academically and technically qualified persons to meet their local community's various needs.

VTC preparing pan-Arab conference

AMMAN (Petra) — The Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) is in the process of preparing a pan-Arab conference to promote vocational training for Arab youths.

The meeting is slated to be attended by delegates from eight Arab countries, including Jordan, as well as specialists from regional and international organisations.

VTC Director General Ali Nasrallah, who made the announcement Sunday, described the meeting as organised in conjunction with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) with a focus on attracting juveniles for training in different trades.

Apart from Jordan, delegates will hail from Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria, Yemen,

Tunisia, Iraq and Palestine and will review studies which discuss the implementation of an integrated programme on vocational training designed in such a way as to respond to Arab needs at both national and regional levels, Mr. Nasrallah said.

The papers are directed to address the specific needs of Arab youth as well as labour market requirements in various Arab countries for skilled workers.

He stated that they will also cover teaching and training aids for upgrading instructor skills.

Dr. Nasrallah asserted that papers call for the introduction of skills for trainees to meet the requirements of local and regional labour markets particularly in urban regions.

80 % of global population does not consume sufficient calcium

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, about 80 per cent of the world's population doesn't consume enough calcium to stay healthy.

Current research demonstrates that bones are not simply solid mass, but living tissue which changes according to a variety of factors such as age, hormone levels, diet and exercise patterns, Dr. Rawhi Shishtawi, consultant orthopaedist in Amman said.

Two types of microscopic cells are involved in this process, he explained.

The first are osteoblasts or bone builders which construct new tissue if they

receive adequate nourishment from sufficient calcium, vitamin D, hormones and exercise.

The second, osteoclasts, breaks down bone tissue and inadequate nutrition or insufficient exercise will tip the balance towards bone destruction, Dr. Shishtawi confirmed.

Director of the Osteoporosis Programme at the Emory Clinic in Atlanta Nelson Watts MD states that bone tissue amasses until the age of eighteen, remains stable until one's mid-thirties, and then as part of natural ageing process, begins to break down with increasing speed.

Calcium, one of the most important minerals for the integrity of bone tissue is not created by the body, rather is consumed by skin,

nails, hair and lost through perspiration and urine, therefore depends on outside sources, the studies affirmed.

Dr Watts confirms that "if you don't replace the lost mineral through your diet, your system breaks down the bone in order to supply calcium."

Scientists also believe that the hormone oestrogen protects the skeleton by blocking formation of the bone destroying osteoclast.

Robert Heaney, MD, professor of medicine at Creighton University in Omaha maintains that the crucial mineral is available in dairy products and he affirmed that all reduced fat dairy products are rich in the mineral and low in fat.

Milk is the richest supply of calcium with

one glass of skimmed milk containing 302 milligrams of calcium meaning that it is just as nutritious as whole milk only without the fat, Dr. Shishtawi said, however he advises women to breast feed their babies as "mother's milk is very rich in both calcium and vitamins," he added.

Dr. Shishtawi advises his patients especially post-menopausal women and the elderly people to increase their intake of all milk products, dates and most fruits as they are all "very high in both vitamins and minerals," he added.

Calcium does more than simply build and strengthen bones, according to Bess Dawson-Hughes MD, associate professor of medicine at Tufts University

School of Medicine in Boston, studies show that it retards high blood pressure, improves the functioning of the heart, muscles and nerves and also protects against colon cancer.

Dr. Hughes maintains the body needs an adequate amount of vitamin D adjunct to the calcium to aid absorption.

Some people, however, lack a sufficient supply of the enzyme lactase which breaks down lactose, or milk sugar, which can cause unpleasant symptoms like abdominal bloating, gas, diarrhoea, nausea and cramps, if it remains unabsorbed in the intestines, Dr. Hughes said and advised such patients to take oral medicine to break down lactose.

Director of the Nutrition at the Cooper Clinic in Dallas Georgia Kostas, says to increase absorption of calcium take a supplement with food or orange or tomato juice as vitamin C also increases absorption.

Dr. Kostas says that smaller amounts taken throughout the day are absorbed better than one big dose and she advises against ingesting the supplements with coffee, tea or cola as caffeine hinders absorption.

According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, high calcium intake generally does not cause problems, very few run the risk of developing kidney stones.

However, Dr. Watts states that calcium is not sufficient without

exercise. Studies show, he said, that women who receive sufficient calcium and work out regularly have better bone mass than those who do one to the exclusion of the other.

Dr. Heaney did focus on studies which demonstrate that certain foods and medications steal the essential mineral from the body such as over consumption of protein, salts and phosphorus (found in sodas) all of which cause excessive excretion of calcium from urine.

Medications can also deplete calcium stores, Dr. Heaney says, "They do so in three ways: interfere with cells which repair bones, decrease calcium absorption and increase calcium excretion through urine."

A variety of non-invasive procedures can determine the condition of your bones, Dr. Kostas said.

The newest and most accurate technique is dual X-ray absorption (DXA) which uses photons (a unit of electromagnetic energy) generated by an X-ray tube at two energy levels, Dr. Kostas explained.

During Ramadan, Dr. Shishtawi advises fasting people, especially elderly people, pregnant women and menopausal women to have a third meal between the iftar and suhor containing dairy products to boost calcium in the body. He also advises fasting people not to over-exert themselves during the day in order to save energy.

Taleban gains send powerful message ahead of Afghan talks

KABUL (AFP) — The Taleban militia's new battlefield gains against their bitter enemies north of the Afghan capital have sent a powerful message ahead of another international conference on the strife-torn nation.

"The Taleban want to show that they are the masters in Afghanistan and the international community, which doesn't recognise them, will have to deal with them," said one well-placed observer in Kabul.

"That is, without doubt, the message they want to get through before the meeting of donor nations," which will be held in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan Tuesday, he added.

The radical Islamic militia, which controls two thirds of the country, launched a lightning attack Thursday against anti-Taleban forces on the front north of the capital.

They captured the key Bagram Air Base, 50 kilometres from Kabul and nearby Charikar, capital of Parwan province. They also took most of the neighbouring province of Kapisa.

Their inexorable advance is continuing, with little resistance, towards the strategic town of Gulbahar, the gateway to the Panjshir Valley — the reputedly impregnable bastion of ex-Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masood who fled when the Taleban took the capital Kabul last September.

Because of its strategic location, Gulbahar is said to be the key to entering the Panjshir.

Mr. Masood, the military chief of ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani, is one of the main figures in the fight against the Taleban, along with northern warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum.

General Dostum controls the Salang Tunnel, 120 kilometres north of Kabul, which may soon become a Taleban target.

The Soviet-built tunnel, more than two kilometres long, runs under the Hindu Kush Mountains and is the only route to northern Afghanistan, which remains under opposition control.

"The winter factor will, without doubt, play a part," one expert on Afghanistan said.

"The Taleban will want to get results before they are hampered by the harsh winter in an area that they don't know as well as their adversaries," he added.

"The fact is that the Taleban don't understand why the international community has refused to recognise them since they took Kabul on Sept. 27, and while they control two thirds of the country."

One reason is the ultra-strict Islamic Law which the Taleban have imposed in areas under their control. Most of the international outrage has been targeted at rules banning women from working, the closing of girls' schools. Women must stay indoors unless covered from head-to-toe.

The world community has threatened to cut some aid programmes, notably for education.

"The Taleban are upset by this attitude which they don't understand," said the expert.

"They see their recent victories as proof to the aid nations that nothing can be done in the country without them."

Suspected IRA device explodes near N. Ireland police patrol

BELFAST (Agencies) — A device believed to have been planted by the IRA exploded late Saturday as a police patrol was driving through Downpatrick, a coastal town 30 kilometres southeast of Belfast, police said.

Police said one person had been slightly injured in the blast. The police car and another car nearby were damaged in the blast.

Police did not say what kind of explosive device was involved. The area has been cordoned off and police said a search of the area would take place once it was light.

If IRA involvement is confirmed, it would be fifth attack by the Irish Republican Army against the police inside two weeks.

The IRA has carried out most of its attacks using rockets or home-made mortars and so far has only caused minor injuries.

However Royal Ulster Constabulary Chief Ronnie Flanagan said recently that the IRA "are trying to kill police officers at the moment."

Former U.S. Senator Tsongas dies

BOSTON (R) — Former Massachusetts Senator and Democratic presidential candidate Paul Tsongas died of pneumonia Saturday, a spokeswoman for Brigham and Women's Hospital said. He was 55.

Tsongas was admitted to the hospital on Jan. 3 with liver and heart problems stemming from earlier cancer treatments, the spokeswoman said.

Tsongas, a Massachusetts senator who retired from Congress in 1985 to battle a deadly form of bone cancer, ran for president in 1992, losing the Democratic presidential nomination to Bill Clinton who went on to defeat George Bush in the general election.

President Bill Clinton described Tsongas, the son of a Greek immigrant father and an American mother, as "a great American."

"He cared deeply about his beloved state of Massachusetts and about our country and its future," Mr. Clinton said in a written statement. "In a life devoted to public service he set an unparalleled example of integrity, candor and commitment."

Sen. Edward Kennedy, who represented Massachusetts alongside Mr. Tsongas, said in a statement "Paul was a great friend, a great congressman for the people of Lowell and a great senator for the state of Massachusetts."

During his presidential campaign, Tsongas was described as professorial and singularly uncharismatic.

"I'm the most unlikely candidate," said Tsongas, who preached that the United States must face the hard truth that it was in danger of becoming uncompetitive abroad.

He shot from obscurity to sometime front-runner in the 1992 race for the Democratic presidential nomination to Bill Clinton who went on to defeat George Bush in the general election.

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Thousands demonstrate against government in Tirana

TIRANA (AFP) — Several thousand people massed in central Tirana Sunday to demonstrate against the government of President Sali Berisha, but police dispersed the crowd by force, an AFP journalist at the scene reported.

Several people were wounded, including a man in his 50s who suffered a head injury, when police charged the demonstrators with truncheons, witnesses said.

Around 2,000 people had massed on the central Skenderberg Square shouting "down with dictatorship" while hundreds of riot police kept back another 3,000 people trying to join the crowd.

The demonstrators on the square were dispersed just before noon (1100 GMT) and the area was reopened to traffic. Riot police remained in place to prevent another rally.

The government stands accused in particular of encouraging so-called Pyramid Schemes, "get-rich-quick" savings schemes run by private firms that prey on naive consumers.

Several of the schemes have collapsed recently.

Women in tears shouting "we want our money" were among Sunday's demonstrators and several women fainted during the protest.

Angry investors had swamped the centre of Tirana Wednesday following the collapse of one such scheme, the Soudja Company, demanding government intervention to recover their savings.

More than 100,000 people had invested in the company in the past four years lured by Soudja's pledges of monthly interest rates of 30 to 100 per cent.

The angry crowd chanted "We want our money" outside the offices blaming the government for blocking their savings which were reinvested by the company in state banks.

Demonstrators threw stones at police who charged them with truncheons to break up the protest.

Albanian sources say that one family in three has turned to these kind of saving schemes offered by dozens of companies in a bid to boost their income.

Savers are offered possibly-high rates of interest to deposit funds which are then used to pay previous investors.

But in many cases, finance company bosses have fled the country pocketing their clients' money, police said.

Albania is Europe's poorest country after the long years of Communist rule under former Stalinist dictator Enver Hoxha stifled development and left its coffers plundered.

They captured the key Bagram Air Base, 50 kilometres from Kabul and nearby Charikar, capital of Parwan province. They also took most of the neighbouring province of Kapisa.

Their inexorable advance is continuing, with little resistance, towards the strategic town of Gulbahar, the gateway to the Panjshir Valley — the reputedly impregnable bastion of ex-Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masood who fled when the Taleban took the capital Kabul last September.

Because of its strategic location, Gulbahar is said to be the key to entering the Panjshir.

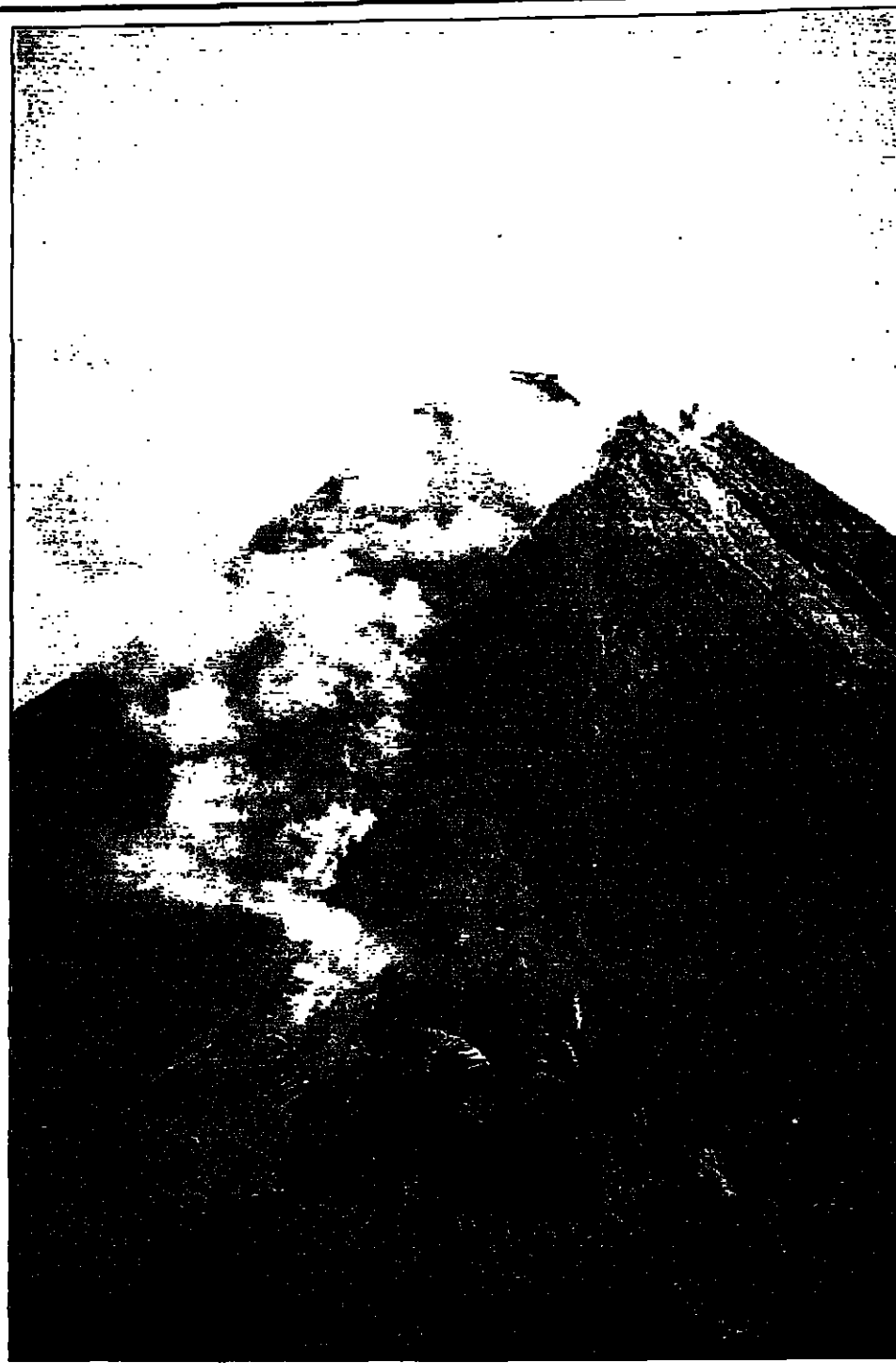
Mr. Masood, the military chief of ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani, is one of the main figures in the fight against the Taleban, along with northern warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum.

General Dostum controls the Salang Tunnel, 120 kilometres north of Kabul, which may soon become a Taleban target.

The Soviet-built tunnel, more than two kilometres long, runs under the Hindu Kush Mountains and is the only route to northern Afghanistan, which remains under opposition control.

"The winter factor will, without doubt, play a part," one expert on Afghanistan said.

"The Taleban will want to get results before they are hampered by the harsh winter in an area that they don't know as well as their adversaries," he added.



Mount Merapi spews out smoke as lava runs down its slope Saturday following an eruption Friday. Thousands of residents were evacuated from the area after the eruption (AFP photo)

Indonesian residents ignore warnings from Pacific rim of fire volcano

TURGO (AFP) — Thousands of people have ignored danger warnings, maintained by the Indonesian authorities Sunday, and returned to their homes on the slopes of the erupting Merapi volcano.

Scores men and women even returned to their daily chores in the hamlet of Turgo as lava continued to spew from the 2,911-metre high rim of fire mountain in Central Java province.

Experts maintained an "alert" status, the highest warning on their scale, for Merapi, which erupted Friday.

"Merapi's activities were dominated by lava flow and there is still no change in frequency compared to yesterday," said Sunarto, an official at the main outpost monitoring the volcano, in Kaburung.

Visibility was obstructed by heavy cloud shrouding the summit, but lava bursts could be heard and resulting tremors were felt at the post, he said.

Many of the thousands of people forced to flee lava and heat clouds Friday have returned or are impatient to get back to their homes.

Indonesia's 17,000 islands are dotted by some 500 volcanoes, of which 127 are still active and make up the Pacific rim of fire. In 1982, Mount Galunggung in west Java erupted killing more than 100 people.

The worst eruption in modern times was Krakatoa, in the strait of Sunda between Java and Sumatra islands in 1883, which killed 36,000. Tambora, on the eastern island of Sumbawa killed 90,000 people in 1815.

In Klanten district on the southeastern slopes of Merapi, thousands of evacuees returned home to start cleaning up ash which had not been washed away by rain Saturday, reports said.

Officials said about 15,000 people were originally evacuated from four villages in the district. The official Antara news agency put the figure at 7,453 people who had all returned home by late Saturday.

Sixteen families refused to leave Turgo, on the southern slopes, at all.

Although most of the houses in the hamlet remained empty, scores of men and women could be seen busy cutting grass for livestock and wood for their kitchen.

"I want to die here anyway," said one elderly woman, cutting tall grass with a sickle.

Most of her neighbours were in nearby Hargobinangun where about 2,000 people from the area, including the hill resort of Kalurung, have taken temporary shelter.

Turgo was one of the hardest hit places when Merapi exploded in December 1994, killing 66 people and again forcing thousands to flee.

Down the slope in Hargobinangun, most of the refugees said they wanted to get back to their homes.

"Some men have returned home, to resume work in their fields or just to guard their possessions," said the village chief, Suparjengat.

A communal kitchen set up by the relief team, was continuing operation, feeding the refugees who have already spent two nights huddled on mats in the village hall, two schools and other makeshift shelters.

Other people had taken shelter in Kepuharjo, to the east, but had returned to their hamlets of Kaliadem and Bengeng, the Pikiran Rakyat daily said.

Danish bombers target British sportspeople

COPENHAGEN (R) — Suspected Danish neo-Nazis remained in custody Sunday planned a letter-bomb campaign against British leftists and sports personalities married to blacks, Danish officials said Sunday.

Police described the Group of Seven arrested in swoops Saturday as part of the worst international conspiracy ever to operate in Denmark.

A court early Sunday remanded five Danes in custody for 27 days, the first 13 to be spent in isolation, and freed two on bail after the raids and the retrieval of three letter-bombs posted in nearby Sweden to addresses in London.

"They were intended for people known as left-leaning and by sportspeople married to blacks," Danish Justice Minister Frank Jensen told the Danish daily Berlingske Tidende.

The Politiken newspaper said British police had alerted the intended recipients and briefed them on what to do if they received a suspicious package. The names of the targets have not been revealed.

The paper said that neo-Nazi literature and symbols were found during the raids in Copenhagen and in a seaside village north of the capital, along with detonators, a nine millimetre pistol and a pump-action shotgun.

The only one of the seven to be named by police, 26-year-old Thomas Derry Nakaba, shot a policeman in the groin as detectives forced their way into his home but said he fired because he thought the raiders were leftist enemies out to kill him.

Danish police were alerted to the group's activities by Britain's Scotland Yard through a police intelligence clearing house in Wiesbaden, Germany, the paper added.

Detectives followed Mr. Nakaba to the Swedish port of Malmö, a short ferry-ride from Copenhagen, where he posted three devices disguised as video tapes later retrieved by Swedish police and found to contain charges sufficient to maim, but not kill.

British Sky Television News Saturday said that Mr. Nakaba had connections with an extreme-right British organisation, Combat 18, so-called because of the first and eighth letters of the alphabet — A and H — the initials of Adolf Hitler.

"This looks like international terrorism and we see it in the gravest possible light. We would describe it as among the most dangerous we have ever seen on Danish soil," Detective Chief Per Larsen told the Danish news agency Ritzau.

Denmark's National Socialist Movement, the country's best-known neo-Nazi group, denied any connection to the plotters but chairman Jonni Hansen told Politiken that Mr. Nakaba was known in Nazi circles.

"I know the name and have seen him at demonstrations but he is not a member of the party," Mr. Hansen said.

Denmark's liberal freedom of speech laws have made it something of a neo-Nazi haven, to the irritation of neighbouring Germany, where Nazi tracts and paraphernalia are banned, and to the discomfort of Danes who remember wartime Nazi occupation.

German groups have been able to post banned literature to German addresses from Danish post boxes, including a list of 280 German leftists and liberals to be "punished."

In 1995 Nazis from several countries were allowed to march in the Danish town of Roskilde, west of Copenhagen, in protest against the arrest locally of German-American neo-Nazi leader Gary Lauck, later extradited to Germany.

South Korean student Sunday. Riot police fired against new labour in S. Korea.

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World News



A South Korean student protester is arrested by a group of riot policemen outside the Hanyang University in Seoul Sunday. Riot police fired teargas to disperse about 1,000 students staging a rally in support of workers, protesting against new labour laws (Reuters photo)

S. Korea softens stance on unionists; clashes erupt

SEOUL (R) — South Korea said Sunday it would delay arresting seven fugitive union leaders holed up in a Seoul cathedral after they agreed to halt indefinite strikes against a new labour law that have hit industry for more than three weeks.

The domestic Yonhap news agency quoted a senior official from the Seoul district prosecutor's office as saying police had put off storming Myongdong Cathedral to arrest the unionists.

Despite the softening government stance, violent clashes continued between riot police and students, showing passions over the law were still inflamed.

"Now that there is a lull in the strikes and political figures are seeking dialogue, it is necessary to exercise flexibility in executing the arrest warrants," the unnamed prosecution official was quoted as saying.

Prosecutors were not available to confirm the report.

The government has previously shown no signs of backing down on its threat to arrest the unionists. Police picked up another union leader Saturday, bringing to five the number arrested in recent days.

But in a major setback, Kwon Young-Kil, head of the outlawed Korean Confederation of Trade Unions and one of the seven taking refuge in the cathedral, has said union members would limit strikes to Wednesdays only.

Confederation heads said the focus was now on trying to revise the new law, which makes it easier for firms to sack workers, after previously insisting it must be scrapped.

However, with a tight security net still in place around the cathedral, and regular clashes between protesters and riot police in the streets since the bill was rammed through parliament on Dec. 26, the situation remained volatile.

Riot police mounted several raids on Hanyang University in the capital just after mid-day Sunday, firing teargas to try to disperse up to 1,000 students rallying against both the labour legislation and a new security law.

Armour-plated vehicles unleashed barrages of teargas at the students, who initially fled but then regrouped and hurled molotov cocktails and fought with iron bars in intermittent clashes lasting one hour.

The students later converged near Myongdong where police waded in, firing teargas and clubbing students with batons.

Witnesses said police dragged more than 10 students away but it was unclear if they had been detained. That clash lasted just under an hour.

Any decision to storm the cathedral and drag out the seven unionists camped out in a ramshackle tent would spark a political storm in a country where more than a quarter of the population are practising Christians.

Separately, the first member of a team of 10 world labour leaders arrived Sunday to put pressure on the government to scrap the most inflammatory parts of the legislation.

Vic Thorpe, head of the International Chemical Workers' Federation, said the team would meet strike leaders at Myongdong and follow up efforts of four union colleagues who left last week after deportation threats.

Seoul's top immigration official has said the new delegation would be expelled if it joined strike-related protests.

Hyundai Motor Co. Ltd., the nation's largest car maker, reopened Saturday. Other key factories in the export sector have operated normally for several days.

Output losses from the strikes have amounted to 2.6 trillion won (\$3.1 billion). Lost exports have hit \$467 million.

The latest union leader to be arrested was seized in the southeastern city of Ulsan, home of the Hyundai Group, which has been at the forefront of the strikes.

President Kim Young-Sam has refused to revise or scrap the law, arguing labour reform is crucial to trim corporate costs and improve competitiveness.

Stoyanov sworn in as Bulgaria's new president

SOFIA (AFP) — Bulgaria's new president, Petar Stoyanov, was sworn in Sunday before parliament and immediately urged the chamber to agree to early legislative elections in the troubled East European country.

Mr. Stoyanov, who crushed the challenge from ruling Socialists in November presidential elections, reiterated opposition demands that the government agree to snap polls to allow the people to give a verdict on its dire economic record.

"People are demonstrating in the streets because their poverty has reached desperate levels," Mr. Stoyanov, 44, told the inauguration gathering, who included outgoing President Zhelyu Zhelev, caretaker Premier Zhan Videnov and Orthodox Patriarch Maxim.

Mr. Stoyanov, who officially takes over the reins of power Wednesday, will assume control of a country in turmoil. Dramatic economic collapse in 1996 triggered the fall of Mr. Videnov's administration in December and brought protesters desperate for a change of government out on the streets calling for snap polls.

Mr. Stoyanov and Mr. Zhelev have added their voices to the two-week protest movement, but the ruling Socialists, while prepared for a measure of compromise, have insisted on forming a new government.

Elections are not due until the end of 1998, but the opposition has called for them to be brought forward to march of this year.

"Help young people to choose Bulgaria" instead of emigrating, Mr. Stoyanov appealed to parliament after taking his oath of office.

On leaving parliament, Mr. Stoyanov was feted by several hundred opposition supporters gathered at the parliament building. The opposition has planned a further protest rally later Sunday.

Mr. Stoyanov, who was inaugurated along with his Vice-President, Todor Kavalzhiev, also set the tone for his tenure by urging the troubled East European country to look West.

The new president said that Bulgaria should strive under his presidency to join the European Union and NATO, heralding another possible confrontation with the ruling Socialists, who have held back on the issue of joining the Western alliance in view of Moscow's opposition.

Sunday's inauguration was the first stage in the transfer of power, which will culminate Wednesday in a second ceremony during which Mr. Zhelev will solemnly present Mr. Stoyanov with the keys to the seat of the presidency.

Tight security measures were in place around the parliament building, scene of violent clashes earlier this month between police and protesters calling for Mr. Videnov's former communists to relinquish their grip on the government.

After receiving the keys on Wednesday, ceremonies will be completed when Mr. Stoyanov walks at the head of a procession to the tomb of the unknown soldier to be invested as commander-in-chief of the Bulgarian army. He will also watch a military march-past.

For the three days until Wednesday, Bulgaria will thus have two heads of state, according to the presidency's head of protocol, Christo Cholakov. If a presidential decree is required during those three days, it will be signed by both the presidents, he told the BTA agency.

The inauguration ceremonies mark the beginning of a new state tradition in Bulgaria, Mr. Cholakov said, since for the first time a real transfer of power between two presidents will take place in the country.

6 die in attack on Rwanda aid workers' compound

KIGALI (R) — Six people were killed and one U.S. citizen was seriously wounded when Hutu militiamen attacked an aid workers' compound in the northern Rwandan town of Ruhengeri, a Western diplomat said Sunday.

A senior Rwandan military officer told Reuters: "These attacks are deliberately mounted to scare away expatriates."

Three Rwandan soldiers were among the dead in the Saturday evening attack, the diplomat said. A senior U.N. source said the three others killed were local employees of the medical charity Medecins Du Monde (Doctors of the World).

"U.N. people have been told to stay put and not go out. And as soon as we have talked to the army we will be discussing whether or not to suspend operations," the U.N. official said.

"The fighting appeared to have started in the slum areas of town among returnees who have come back from Zaire. There were two other incidents during the night during which a grenade was thrown into an aid worker's house," the U.N. official said.

The attack was the latest in a series involving expatriates in the area, which is near the border with Zaire.

"It was an attack on a compound housing Medecins Sans Frontieres, Medecins Du Monde and Save the Children," said the Western diplomat. The compound is 225-kilometre northwest of the capital, Kigali.

The diplomat would not identify the injured American. "The U.S. citizen has already had his leg amputated, is unconscious and will be medevaced today," he said.

A Rwandan military officer said: "We know these people are now operating from inside Rwanda. They think if they can drive out the expatriates now working here they can mount such attacks more easily."

He said the gangs responsible for recent attacks on aid workers had returned from neighbouring Zaire with other Rwandan refugees late last year. They were now becoming bolder, he said.

The United Nations had warned Saturday that escalating violence in Rwanda could force the suspension of humanitarian operations in some areas.

"I am surprised at the violence. I'd rather not put people in danger and if this violence continues then I have no option but to suspend operations in some areas," Omar Bakhet, U.N. Rwanda coordinator, told Reuters.

On Monday and Wednesday at Gicvi, in southern Gisenyi prefecture, two United Nations vehicles were attacked with gunfire and hand grenades and two expatriate staff were beaten by Hutu militia, according to U.N. officials.

Yugoslav opposition protests set to continue amid suspense

BELGRADE (AFP) — The Serbian opposition's daily protests were poised to enter their third month Sunday amid suspense over whether Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic would contest a decision recognising an opposition electoral win in Belgrade.

The opposition called on their supporters to bring their pets to a rally later in the day, while students, who back the opposition, planned a separate protest in the evening.

Zoran Djindjic, one of the leaders of the opposition Together Coalition, was due to meet German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel in Bonn Sunday, but was expected to be back in time for the rally.

The protests were touched off after the authorities refused to recognise opposition victories in 14 out of 18 major towns and cities in Nov. 17 local elections.

So far, Mr. Milosevic's ruling Socialist Party has recognised opposition wins in just seven towns.

But opposition leaders were keenly watching Sunday to see whether the authorities would contest a ruling issued by the electoral commission Tuesday giving the opposition control over the capital, with 60 out of 110 seats on the city council.

The deadline for lodging complaints was Saturday afternoon, but a local judge told independent radio B-92 that the court would wait until Monday in case any appeals had been sent by post.

A top official from New Democracy, one of the Socialists' coalition partners, said that according to unofficial information, the ruling party would contest the ruling.

"This would mean that they are refusing to take advantage of the exit door offered to them to end this crisis," Tahir Hasanovic, New Democracy secretary general, said in an interview Sunday with the opposition paper Demokracija.

The junior coalition party was currently at odds with Mr. Milosevic's Socialists and has called for the opposition victories to be recognised.

Some 30,000 protesters celebrated two straight months of daily demonstrations Saturday in a carnival mood, with hundreds dressed up as huntsmen, soldiers, miners, air hostesses or nurses. Housewives came out to join the protests wearing aprons and carrying saucepans and brooms.

The protest was dubbed "uniforms against uniforms" — a dig at the riot police who have been put on the streets by the regime.

Vuk Draskovic, another leader of the opposition Together Coalition, told the crowd that the two months of protests had seriously weakened Mr. Milosevic's regime.

"After two months of protests, he has lost the support of the army and the church. The only thing he still has is the state television and the media," he said.

Meanwhile, about 1,000 Serbs demonstrated Saturday in Pristina, capital of Serbia's southern, Albanian-majority province of Kosovo, in protest at a car-bomb attack against the Serb rector of the university.

Radivoje Papovic and his driver were both badly injured in the blast on Thursday and are in hospital in Belgrade.

During the half-hour demonstration which went off without incident, Pristina Mayor Dusan Simic blamed the attack on ethnic "Albanian separatists" who he said were supported by Albania.

In a jibe at opposition protests in Belgrade, he said: "Those who in Belgrade are trying to undermine Serbia and those who kill Serbs and loyalist Albanians here are manipulated by the same foreign hands."

Three Albanians reputed to be pro-Belgrade, have been assassinated in the past 10 days in Kosovo.

Austrian press says Vranitzky exits on cue

VIENNA (R) — Austrian newspapers said Sunday Chancellor Franz Vranitzky's decision to resign after more than a decade in power was well timed and praised the political talents of designated successor Viktor Klima.

Mr. Vranitzky, Europe's second longest-serving leader after German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, announced Saturday he was stepping down and named Finance Minister Klima as his successor as chancellor and Social-Democratic Party leader.

"Klima follows Vranitzky: the Social Democrats set about rebuilding their fortunes," wrote the daily Kurier in an editorial, forecasting a wide-ranging reshuffle of the Social Democrat team.

Mr. Klima, 49, was cast from the same mould as his predecessor but had greater determination and was more adept at winning opponents round, the paper said.

"Klima represents continuity but with different means. He is cleverer, more capable of getting the desired results and has a better instinct for power," Kurier said.

The chancellor-designate could face his first challenge within days. The conservative People's Party, which governs in coalition with the Social Democrats, has insisted it wants a say in the appointment of a new finance minister.

"We want to make our thoughts known and we do not want to find out via the media," said People's Party leader Wolfgang Schuessel, apparently smarting from Mr. Vranitzky's failure to inform him in advance of his resignation.

Social Democrat Parliamentary Speaker Heinz Fischer swiftly dismissed Mr. Schuessel's demands.

"That is not in the coalition agreement," he said.

Mr. Klima appeared to have gone underground, keeping out of the media spotlight and maintaining silence on his future plans.

Earlier Mr. Klima reluctantly accepted the job at the helm of government after Chancellor Vranitzky's exit from politics but said the move did not quite fit in with his plans.

A righttipped Klima, having shunned the public spotlight for days, offered only one sentence to comment on his meteoric rise through the ranks of Austrian politics to government head in less than five years.

"I did have a different plan for my life, but I guess I'm going to do it," he told Austrian state television late Saturday over a mobile telephone.

Sunni Muslim militants torch Iranian Cultural Centre in Lahore

LAHORE, Pakistan (AFP) — Hundreds of Sunni Muslim militants Sunday set fire to the Iranian Cultural Centre in Lahore, a day after a bomb blast killed 26 people, police said.

Around 800 people chanting slogans denouncing the killing of Ziaur Rahman Farooqi, chief of the Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) party in the bomb blast, attacked the building in central Lahore.

They removed furniture and literature from the building then set it on fire, they said. No casualties were reported but the building was badly damaged.

There has been growing rivalry between Pakistan's majority Sunni community and Shi'ite Muslims.

The SSP accuses Iran of backing Pakistan's minority Shi'ite community, while Iran accuses the SSP of involvement in a murderous campaign against Pakistan's Shi'ites.

Farooqi was killed and his deputy Azam Tariq was critically wounded when a remote controlled bomb on a motorbike exploded outside a Lahore court.

The two SSP leaders, escorted by a heavy police contingent including commandos, were being brought to the court to answer charges involving the murder of several Shi'ite leaders.

On top of the 26 dead, more than 60 people were injured.

The angry crowd marched to the Iranian centre after an SSP rally in the city during which speakers condemned Shi'ite Muslims and Iran.

The SSP activists blamed Tehran for backing terrorism in the country and demanded the expulsion of Iranian representatives from Pakistan.

Pakistani authorities deployed police around Shi'ite and Sunni mosques in major cities after the bomb attack.

Police have been put on "red alert" and strict security has been ordered "to prevent sectarian violence and acts of terrorism," Raza Zia, the chief of Islamabad police, said.

Officials said security had also been tightened around bus stands, airports and other public places and a ban had been imposed on pillion riding on motorcycles.

Police, who lost 19 men in Saturday's bomb blast, were present in large numbers near the SSP rally but did not intervene to stop the march, witnesses said.

Qazi Hussain Ahmed, chief of the fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami party, and other party officials were angrily turned away when they tried to join the SSP meeting, witnesses said.

Saturday's bombing sent a shock wave across the country, heightening fears of increased sectarian violence.

A strike was observed in the Punjab town of Jhang where the SSP has its headquarters and also in Farooqi's home town of Samundari.

Shops and markets were closed in nearby Rawalpindi where SSP activists staged protest rallies.

The SSP chief was contesting elections from two constituencies in Punjab province. Sources said his supporters set fire to an election office of rival candidate Fakhr Imam in Kabirwala and blocked traffic in several other Punjab cities demanding the arrest of the killers.

The SSP has been involved in bitter rivalry with the Shi'ite militant group, Sipah-i-Muhammad Pakistan (SMP), which was set up to counter a strong anti-Shi'ite campaign launched by the Sunni group after it surfaced in 1985.

SSP founder Haq Nawaz Jhangvi was assassinated in Jhang in March 1990.

Farooqi was honoured by the Saudi Arabian government with awards for his book highlighting the Islamic policy of late Saudi King Faisal.

Sunnis who are the dominant community in Pakistan and Shi'ites, who make up some 20 per cent of the 130 million population, have largely lived in peace.

Commentators and analysts attribute the sectarian tension since Pakistan's independence 50 years ago to activities by militants who get foreign finance.

In 1990 an Iranian diplomat Sadeq Ganji was shot dead in Lahore. The murder was blamed on the SSP.

Iran strongly condemned Sunday what it described as a "savage and terrorist" arson attack on its cultural centre in Lahore and urged the Pakistani government to punish the culprits.

"This is a savage and terrorist act and we demand the Pakistani government to arrest those responsible for this inhuman act," Iran's cultural attaché in Pakistan, whose identity was not revealed, told state television.

Iranian television said the attack by SSP "hugs and terrorists" had "completely destroyed" the Eghbal Laburi Library in the cultural house.

"The library was a main centre of publication for Farsi-language books and a joint heritage of Iran and Pakistan," it said. It contained some 12,000 precious books, including the Muslim holy book the Koran, the television said.

Iran's deputy parliamentary speaker, Hassan Rahnai, urged Pakistan to rein in extremist groups engaged in violence against the minority Shi'ite Muslim community there.

"These groups disrupt Pakistan's security and harm unity among Muslims," he said in a meeting with Pakistani Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan, who visited here last week.

His comments came after the gunning down of two Shi'ite leaders in the Pakistani province of Punjab.

S. Africa approves arms sale to Algeria

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa said Sunday it had approved the sale of "non-lethal" military equipment to the Algerian government, which is fighting Islamic fundamentalists.

"Late last year the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC) approved the marketing of non-lethal equipment to Algeria," a spokesman for the Department of Foreign Affairs told Reuters.

He gave no details of the deal, but the Johannesburg-based Sunday Independent newspaper said the equipment consisted of pilotless military aircraft. It did not give a value for the contract.

President Nelson Mandela's government, which took office in South Africa's first democratic elections in April 1994, has pledged not to sell arms to states in conflict or governments which abuse human rights.

It set up the NCACC to vet all deals and ensure they met guidelines intended to clean up the image of South Africa's arms industry, which exported without scruple during the apartheid years.

But despite the guidelines Mr. Mandela's government is contemplating selling arms to Syria, at the centre of a perennial conflict zone, drawing Pretoria into a row with Washington.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said last week the cabinet had yet to decide on whether South African companies would be given permission to bid for the Syrian contract, involving the upgrading of aiming technology on Soviet-built T-72 tanks.

But the local Sunday Times reported Sunday that leaked cabinet minutes showed the cabinet had approved the signing of a contract pending a final go-ahead from Deputy President Thabo Mbeki.

"South Africa's plans to export three billion rand (\$641 million) worth of tank firing control systems to Syria are far more advanced than the government claimed," the paper said.

The foreign affairs spokesman said there was no immediate comment on the Sunday Times story.

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Mutually beneficial economic ties

JORDANIAN-IRAQI relations are on the mend. Judging by the business-like atmosphere that surrounded talks here between Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and negotiations held in Baghdad between two Jordanian ministers and their Iraqi counterparts, we might never restore relations to what they were before Aug. 2, 1990. But we might be heading towards reaching a formula under which the two countries can cooperate and achieve mutual benefits from this cooperation.

The fact that the two governments have reached agreement on a new trade protocol and on the terms of continued supply of Iraqi oil to Jordan means that Baghdad and Amman need not see eye-to-eye in the political sphere in order to work for their mutual benefits. Rather, Jordan and Iraq have chosen to agree that political differences should not impede normal economic ties between two Arab neighbours.

While it is perhaps too early to jump to conclusions about where the Jordanian-Iraqi relations are headed, it is worth noting that Amman and Baghdad have begun a process which will ultimately prove to other Arabs that economic relations among them can be conducted in a way that is not governed by political considerations. It so happens that Iraq needs us as much as we need it. Thus, the new economic ties that are being moulded can also keep contacts between the two peoples alive and strong.

As representatives of the Arab private sector stressed in a recent meeting here, there is an urgent need to forge an Arab common market that is driven and managed by the Arab business community itself. The private sector should be allowed to do business in an atmosphere that is affected under as little as possible by political considerations. Free trade and commercial exchange among Arab countries can only bring mutual benefits to all of them. Economic development cannot be held hostage to political differences that might emerge among some Arab countries every now and then. Businessmen should have no reason not to trust the stability of the Arab market.

But growth in the regional economy cannot be sustained in the long run unless the political environment is free from tension and instability. The inter-connectedness of the economies of the region cannot be over-emphasised. Nor can the need to work towards marginalising the impact of political differences on economic relations that should be based on institutional and legally protected mechanisms. Until Arab countries are able to resolve their political differences, their focus should be on forging solid economic ties and building regional economic structures without which they will not be able to compete and prosper in the age of regional giants and globalisation.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily criticised the United States for expressing opposition to a decision by South Africa to sell Syria a computerised system to control tank cannons, saying that Washington's position reflects its standing policy of depriving the Arabs of any sophisticated weapons to defend themselves against Israel's aggression. Samir Qatani said the United States is the world's largest trader of weapons and it continually supplies Israel with conventional and non-conventional arms to help it carry out aggression on its neighbours, but, at the same time, it tries to prevent any of these neighbours from acquiring weapons to defend themselves. Along with the other Western powers, the United States continually seeks arms transactions with countries regarded friendly to the West and that do not constitute any threat to the Jewish state, said the writer. He said the United States, using economic and political pressure on Pretoria, might prevent the sale of weapons or military equipment to Syria, but then it proves once again that it is not a neutral peace broker in the Middle East because it is openly biased towards Israel, helping it to stockpile a formidable arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, with which it can impose its will on the Arab countries.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i described the ordeal currently facing Sudan as a repetition of the tragedy that befell Iraq in 1991, with the other Arab states passively looking on and watching destruction of another Arab country without lifting a finger to help stop the disaster. Sultan Hattab said the war in Sudan is a conspiracy concocted by the enemies of the Arab Nation, which have isolated and destroyed Iraq and have been active in fragmenting and weakening the Arab World. He said Arab leaders should step in and prevent another tragedy and act collectively to deter aggression on Sudan. The same enemies of the Arabs who have succeeded in partitioning Iraq by creating the so-called safe havens for Kurds are trying to split Sudan into north and south, a plot which must be confronted by a concerted Arab stand and collective action, continued the writer. The war on Sudan, he added, is primarily directed against Khartoum and Cairo and all the lands of the Nile River valley, and it is a plot to enable foreign forces take control of the water resources, the lifeline of Egypt and Sudan alike.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

The economics of discrimination

INCREASINGLY, THE topic of discrimination is becoming a point of concern for Jordanians. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan underscored the role of discrimination in escalating the inhumanity of human suffering in a comment published in the Jordan Times on Oct. 21, 1995, on a speech by His Holiness the Pope. Discrimination touches, to varying degrees, every aspect of our lives. Still, it remains a confusing issue. The following are some thoughts on the topic:

Discrimination means distinction. It does not mean prejudice, something which has been a source of confusion to many. In some cases, discrimination may exist without any prejudice. For example, one may identify two groups as different, while still treating them both equally, without prejudice. Therefore, discrimination may not be a "bad" thing if it does not involve prejudice. (For the purpose of this article, the word "discrimination" is used to allude to discrimination with prejudice).

How can discrimination be identified? There are two empirical phenomena that may be observed to signal discrimination in a labour market: inequality of achievement of a certain group, and/or inequality of opportunities that are offered to various perceptible groups. In other words, if one observes that a particular race or gender is accomplishing less than another, or that it is offered deficient opportunities, then this is a signal of the existence of discrimination in a labour market. Both instances, which are not mutually exclusive, may be used to indicate the existence of discrimination.

The major sources of discrimination are: personal prejudice, statistical prejudice and monopoly power. Personal prejudice may be based upon taste, upbringing or circumstance which bias a person's feelings against one group vis-a-vis another. It is manifest in labour markets in employer prejudices, where the employer may believe that a certain gender or race is incapable of performing a certain job or jobs. In Jordan, manifestations of this belief are prevalent, especially when it comes to the hiring of women.

Statistical prejudice depends on the quality of information used to make decisions. The worse the quality of information on labour available to an employer, the more it is likely the employer will use subjective criteria to make up for the information deficiency. Societies that either traditionally hide information or cannot produce reliable information are susceptible to this source of discrimination. Traditionally, refugees suffer intensely from discrimination in the labour market due to statistical prejudgements. The host country's

nationals may not have sufficient data on the refugees to make objective assessments.

As a source of discrimination, monopoly power is not less rampant than the other two and may be even more prevalent in advanced societies. If a certain tribe possesses monopoly power in a labour market, other tribes will be discriminated against. Why? So that those who control a market may maintain their hold on who gets what, when and how. Some members of the monopolistic tribe would see equality as a means of reducing the welfare of their tribe and would, therefore, refuse to relinquish the monopoly power. Other members of the tribe may not have enough incentive to act.

It may easily happen that all three sources of discrimination may exist in a labour market. In which case, employment opportunities and the productivity of the whole economy are weakened as people hire less than optimal labour inputs.

Discrimination is a worldwide phenomenon and, contrary to common beliefs, some types of discrimination, such as gender discrimination, are not unique to developing countries alone. In 1978, Fortune magazine surveyed America's top public companies and found only 10 women among the 6,400 top paid executives. By 1990, the figure was up to 19 women among 4,000 surveyed executives. According to the United States' Census Bureau, in 1989 only 18 per cent of American workers earning \$50,000-75,000 a year were women; and above \$75,000 only 12 per cent. Furthermore, the U.S. and the former USSR were in agreement on one thing: the average income of women relative to that of men in each country was 70 per cent.

However, there is very good news for women. The next century is theirs, reports a recent issue of the "Economist," a conservative British magazine. Jobs in the 21st century will require organisational and analytical skills. Women possess skills in abundance, relative to men. Jobs that require physical strength will be plagued with high unemployment rates as machine continues to replace brawn and, ultimately, man. Thus, it is very likely that the next one hundred years will see the rise of the "other" sex.

In Jordan sexism, regionalism and all other "isms" persist because the size of the economic pie is small and because prejudice creates economic rent (benefit) to one group by reducing the share of the other. However, this type of thought is myopic. In the long run, inefficiencies will accumulate to haunt the future generations who will inherit less. They will pay the cost of the laziness of today's rent seekers.



"Jobs in the 21st century will require organisational and analytical skills."

LETTERS

Too high a price for a visit

To the Editor:

DOES JORDAN really want tourists? I address this open question to any concerned party as a follow up to the letter by the Finnish journalist Sirkka Iitvaara, "Why is Aqaba empty?" (Jordan Times, Jan. 8, 1997).

Now we have an article in the British press entitled "Petrifying price of Jordan visa." (See text of article below). Jordan almost certainly is now in the honoured position of charging the top price for any worldwide visa to a tourist destination. In addition, after two weeks, a tourist is obliged to go personally to the police for an extension or face a fine.

I have been involved with tourism in Jordan for eight years and take every opportunity to promote this wonderful and friendly country. But surely the relevant government departments could help to a much greater degree. Why, for example, is Royal Jordanian, the national carrier, seemingly lacking any interest in promoting Jordanian tourism with interest primarily in long haul connections from the Amman hub? Surely this lack of interest could be compensated by allowing international charter flights access to Aqaba and Amman.

How absurd it is that so many visitors to Jordan now fly into Israel. It seems, in fact, that Jordan has become just a satellite for Israeli tourism with a visit to Petra just being an add-on for a tour of Israel. Why couldn't Jerusalem be an add-on for tours to Jordan, or has no one ever considered this a possibility?

Finally it might be an idea if a few Jordanians

involved in tourism made a trip to Sinai, and especially Sharm Al Sheikh, to see how Egypt really says welcome to tourists.

David G. Sellers,
Managing Director,
CCH Travel,
P.O. Box 7322,
Limassol,
Cyprus.

Smoking life away

To the Editor:

SMOKING IS something we live with every day. It is something we cannot and are not allowed to ignore.

Sometimes I wonder why people smoke, but I never found a convincing answer. Perhaps people who smoke have so many troubles they do not find any other way out; they are perhaps so desperate they do not find life worth living.

Some turn to cigarette smoking to calm down, they say. It is sort of a shelter.

Life is so precious, there are many exciting things to experience, to explore; there are so many nice people and beautiful places to visit, so many opportunities to grab.

Whenever you lit a cigarette think of all the things you are going to miss. Health is a blessed gift from God, and we should take good care of it.

Suha Dallal,
National Orthodox School,
Amman.

Petrifying price of Jordan visa

By Cath Urquha

JORDAN HAS taken a commanding lead in the tourist visa price league by increasing the cost of a single-entry visa for British passport holders from £28 to £72.

The Daily Telegraph understands that the 250 per cent price rise, introduced last month, makes Jordan's tourist visas the most expensive in the world for British visitors.

Anyone thinking of border-hopping will be in for even more of a shock — a double-entry tourist visa now costs £141, up from £48.

Brian Coxall, a reader from Beckenham in Kent, learnt of the rise when he booked a holiday in Jordan with Kuoni. "I don't object to paying a reasonable visa fee, but I think £72 is very

high," he said. "And they should have given us more warning of the price rise."

A spokeswoman for the travel agent Trailfinders, which caters for many budget travellers, said: "Some independent travellers have told us they won't go to Jordan because of this price rise."

Munther Qabbah, consul at the Jordanian Embassy in London, said the increase reflected the prices that Jordanian visitors to Britain are charged.

"I understand from many people that the British Embassy in Jordan is charging Jordanians about £65 for a single-entry tourist visa," he said. He added that Jordan was still keen to receive British visitors and explained that most could avoid the high fees by buying their visas on arrival.

British passport holders flying by sea or entering via most land borders can buy a tourist visa on the spot for about £20. The few visitors who enter from Israel over the Allenby Bridge border crossing must buy a visa in advance.

A Foreign Office spokesman denied that Britain charged Jordanians such high fees for single-entry tourist visas. He said these cost £33 for residents of any country who needed a visa to visit Britain, including Jordan, and that £65 was the cost of a multiple-entry tourist visa valid for two years.

A spokeswoman for Kuoni said: "The situation does seem to be rather confused at the moment." Kuoni is advising clients to buy £72 visas before travelling, in case there are

delays for visitors who try to buy visas on entry.

But Jim Smith, managing director of Jasmin Tours, which also offers holidays in Jordan, said he was advising his clients to buy the cheaper visas on arrival. The Daily Telegraph has been unable to find any country that charges British visitors more than £72 for tourist visas, although business travellers face higher charges in some countries.

Our research suggests that Vietnam, Bangladesh and Pakistan vie for second place with £40 single-entry tourist visas — compared with the £10-£20 charged by most countries for which Britons need visas.

We are keen to hear of any high-charging countries we have overlooked.

Daily Telegraph

Human Rights File

Jordan's democracy — still 'no clear sense of direction'

By Waleed M. Sadi

JORDAN IS now in the eighth year since the re-introduction of democracy in 1989, with no sign yet that the democratic process has a clear sense of direction.

The most conspicuous signal that democracy in Jordan is in a maze is its inability to articulate legislations which are organically linked to the democratic process. There is a broad agreement that the most important legislation in this regard is the proposed new election law. Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti has admitted in a recent comment to a national forum assembled to air out views on the features of the new legislation that there is no national consensus on the law to govern future parliamentary elections. What the prime minister probably meant was that the government and opposition do not seem to agree on a common formula to conduct national elections in the future.

The sticking point for many is the one-man, one-vote criterion which several factions view as anathema to contemporary democracy because it allegedly contributes to tribalism and unfair election practices.

In actual terms, the one-man, one-vote formula is well enshrined in international standards. And in the final analysis, it is the voter himself or herself who decides whether to promote tribalism or clanism or whatever.

No election system succeeds unless the people use it properly and on the basis of contemporary standards.

I cannot understand why the existing differences on the proposed election law could not be resolved on the basis of international norms since we have ratified a number of international instruments which shed light on how to attain operational democracy in any given country which is a state party to these instruments.

Unfortunately, we have to appeal to the outside world for guidance because we have failed to elaborate and apply our own Constitution through court decisions as most countries do. Not blessed with a constitutional court and not granting the existing court system the necessary jurisdiction to pronounce itself on controversial constitutional provisions, we have been effectively deprived of benefiting from a living and relevant constitution.

Given this near constitutional void, the country should consult relevant international law on the subject, especially the part which Jordan has become treaty obligated to honour.

The same goes for the current controversy over the salient points in the Press and Publications Law. When in doubt, the government should not hesitate to refer to international standards in a bid to settle a stand off on any issue pertaining to democracy in the country. Given the prominence of laws on elections and freedom of the press in any viable democracy, until the country arrives at a consensus based on internationally binding norms our democracy remains handicapped.

The fact that our democratic process has yet to run its full course suggests that all is not well with it at this point in time. In a way, it is only natural that our democracy still lacks in more than one way, since a decade of experimentation is too short a period for it to come to full fruition. The full development of democracy normally requires a long time before it is perfected or nearing perfection.

During this period, before attaining a full-fledged democracy, both the government and the people share equal responsibility for nurturing a viable and operational democracy. Judging by our own democratic experience, that should be the case in Jordan.

One can list many shortcomings of the government and an equal list of faults which are the making of the people themselves. The lack of full involvement of the public in the democratic process is amply demonstrated by several vital signs: low turnout percentage of voter registration and voting and strong support to tribe, clan or family candidates. This is not to mention the regionalism, sectarianism and ethnic factors, supported by most of us, including the so-called enlightened people.

Even if we presume that some governments highlighted or promoted these negative aspects, the final responsibility for their endorsement rests with the electorate who, alone, makes the final determination on how to cast their votes at the ballot boxes.

The preoccupation of the majority of Jordanians with daily life issues, due to the economic situation prevailing in the country, has led to a poor public participation in the efforts to protect and promote the democratic process.

Lack of a strong democratic tradition also makes people weary of venturing into strong involvement in democracy and defence of basic human rights. There is always a fear and anxiety, entertained by most of us, that involvement in democratic causes would get us into trouble and makes us suspect in the eyes of the government. And even though we, Jordanians, tend to be highly politicised and reasonably informed, we are repeatedly swayed by considerations that turn out to be more subjective than objective.

Successful governments have also contributed to the current state of imperfection of our democratic process. True democracy in any part of the world requires a well-developed infrastructure, for which the state bears primary responsibility. The constant trend to encourage the emergency court system suggests to the public that the martial law regime is always around the corner.

While there is a wide appreciation of the need for a state security court, in times when internal or external security is threatened, there is no public support for an expanded jurisdiction for such an exceptional court regime when in fact there is no such a danger.

According to established norms worldwide, the operation of an extraordinary court must be preceded by a declaration of a state of emergency. A state court is often credited with a more expeditious rendering of justice but, unfortunately, the legal safeguards available to a normal civilian court litigation are often absent.

France has been reputed to be the first state ever to have introduced an emergency court system to deal with security-related issues in the distant past. France has now abolished this exceptional court system.

I would venture to classify the limited resort to an emergency court system, the establishment of a court system authorised to make legal pronouncements on constitutional provisions, the elaboration of a fair and balanced election law and the articulation of a progressive and responsible law on the freedom of the press as principal elements in the required infrastructure for democracy in Jordan.

We cannot expect to attain all these objectives all at once, but we need to begin the long road towards that end.

Jordan,

(continued from page 1)

Jordan is exempt from international law imposed against Iraq following the August invasion of Kuwait. In comments carried by the Jordan News Agency, Mr. Abdul Ra'uf al-Khatib, a member of the delegation, said the negotiators had been crowned with success.

The delegation's success was crowned with the signing of a peace agreement which paved the way for economic ties. Abdul Ra'uf told Petra that the agreement was a landmark in Jordan's approach to the conflict.

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Jordan, Iraq agree on oil price

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan is exempt from the international sanctions imposed against Baghdad following the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

In comments carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Abul Ragheb described the mission to Baghdad as success.

"The delegation's visit has been crowned with success as the negotiations yielded very positive results and paved the way for cementing Jordanian-Iraqi economic ties," Mr. Abul Ragheb told Petra.

Voicing Jordan's appreci-

ation of Iraq's increase of free oil supplies to Jordan, Mr. Abul Ragheb said that Iraq had never failed to supply Jordan with its oil needs over the past few years reflecting the strong ties between the two countries.

The two ministers were accompanied by senior officials from the ministries of finance, transport and post and communications in addition to energy and mineral resources and industry and trade.

The Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI), which has been exerting strong efforts to increase Jordanian

exports to Iraq, welcomed the Jordanian-Iraqi agreements.

"An increase of the goods exported to Iraq will have very positive effects on trade between the two countries and reflect the strong brotherly ties between the Jordanian and Iraqi peoples," ACI President Khalidoun Abu Hassan said.

Mr. Abu Hassan said the agreements would lead to increased transport activities and strengthened ties in trade and industry as well as exchange of services between the two sides.

Arafat seeks to assure settlers

(Continued from page 1)

deal, we have signed peace with all the Israeli people," Mr. Arafat said Sunday. "This is something new."

Mr. Arafat's conciliatory words contrasted sharply with the speech in Hebron a day earlier by Palestinian security chief Jibril Rajoub, who accused the settlers of fomenting "hate and violence and terror" and suggested the city would be better off without them. "They are big stones on our chest, and we have to take them off," he told a rally on Saturday.

David Bar-Ilan, a top aide to Mr. Netanyahu, welcomed Mr. Arafat's words as "an invitation to dialogue with the settlers."

Settler spokesman David Wilder, however, said Mr. Arafat's visit was "a day of national mourning for the Hebron settlers," and called it "despicable" that Mr. Netanyahu had handed control of the town to the Palestinians.

Waving to the crowd from the window of his helicopter, Mr. Arafat landed in Hebron at 12:45 p.m. (1045 GMT). It was his first visit in more than 30 years to Hebron — the last West Bank city to come under Palestinian rule.

A sea of Palestinians waving flags greeted Mr. Arafat, who was surrounded by police as he climbed out of the helicopter.

"Long live Palestine" and "Long live Arafat," the crowd chanted. "We waited a long time for you," read one sign.

Mr. Arafat, wearing his trademark black-and-white keffiyeh and green khaki uniform, sat atop the open sunroof of the car, reaching into the crowd to shake hands and throw kisses as he was driven the 100 metres from the landing pad to the military headquarters.

"I declare Hebron a liberated city," he announced there. Mr. Arafat said the Palestinians' next goal is to take control of "Area C" — the

70 per cent of the West Bank still under Israeli control and establish an independent Palestinian state.

"I call on all of you to come together to build this independent Palestinian state," he said. "We will continue until Jerusalem."

Mr. Arafat thanked U.S. President Bill Clinton, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and "my brother" King Hussein for their help in reaching the Hebron agreement.

Nabil Amr, an adviser to Mr. Arafat, told the crowd that Mr. Arafat was last in Hebron in 1965, when he organised guerrilla cells to fight Israel.

The handover was originally supposed to take place in March 1996, but was delayed because of Israel's concerns for the safety of the settlers who live in amid 120,000 Palestinians in Hebron. Israel retains control of 20 per cent of the city where the settlers live.

Mr. Arafat said Hebron was a springboard for further Israeli withdrawals in the West Bank. He said Israel would release Palestinian women prisoners in a few days followed by the eventual release of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the spiritual leader of the Hamas movement.

"Hebron is a springboard for what comes after...so that we can establish our independent Palestinian state, you have a big responsibility," Mr. Arafat said in Arabic.

"A promise is a promise, we will continue to Jerusalem," he added to applause.

Mr. Arafat has made the same promise about making Arab East Jerusalem his capital in every Palestinian town he has "liberated" since arriving in Gaza in July 1994 to lead the self-rule authority.

Jewish settlers in Hebron had expressed fears ahead of Mr. Arafat's arrival that he would incite Palestinian violence against them in the volatile city.

"I tell you we will abide by our commitments in the agreement," Mr. Arafat shouted, shaking his fist. "We

will abide by what is upon us and they must abide by what is upon them."

Mr. Arafat said that with the long-awaited accord sealed with Mr. Netanyahu, Palestinians had now achieved understandings with both left- and right-wing Israelis.

The 120-seat Israeli parliament approved the agreement with 87 votes and "this is something new in the Middle East region," the president of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) said.

The swaying crowd let out a roar when Mr. Arafat said Palestinians in Israeli jails, especially the leader of Hamas, would soon be released.

"Our brothers in the prisons and at the head of them, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, will soon be released," Mr. Arafat said joyfully to the crowd in the city known for its support of Hamas.

"To our martyrs, we say a vow is a vow and a destiny is a destiny and we will go on until we find the independent Palestinian state," Mr. Arafat added, referring to those Palestinians killed in conflicts with Israel.

Huge Palestinian flags were draped on the headquarters, which until three days ago was the centre for Israel's 30-year military rule of Hebron, and the city was awash with the red, green, black and white Palestinian colours.

The large and raucous crowd was a change from the muted celebrations which have taken place in the city since it was handed over on Friday.

"Abu Ammar has come to Hebron and blessed it," sang Iman Al Jubeiri, as she cheered in celebration as Mr. Arafat's motorcade passed.

"All of Hebron has come out to see the president because now we have joined Ramallah and Bethlehem and the rest of Palestine," said Jihad Al Muhtasib, 40, as he held up his young son to see Mr. Arafat.

Local companies hung welcoming banners, the largest

one the height of the three-storey headquarters, proclaiming in bold red letters that the "Intifada Institute for Driving Lessons salutes the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority and its leader Abu Ammar."

"We have been waiting for this for 30 years," Hebron Mayor Mustafa Naishe said. The agreement on Hebron, reached after much diplomatic arm-twisting by the United States, has revived hopes that Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu can see the wider self-rule accord through to a final resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including issues like settlements and Jerusalem, in 1999.

However, both Arabs and Jews fear violence from each other in Hebron where some 2,000 Israeli soldiers will stay to protect the settlers. "If these Jewish settlers in Hebron who have been provocative to Palestinians here do not make problems there will be no problems in Hebron," said Colonel Rajoub.

He is in charge of the 400 uniformed police and an undisclosed number of plainclothes police who deployed in Hebron after the last Israeli soldiers slipped away at dawn on Friday.

But Palestinian security sources said more than the 400 police stipulated under the deal were in the city along with several hundred plainclothes police, with Israel's tacit approval. The sources said Col. Rajoub would move his headquarters to Hebron from Jericho.

Col. Rajoub, whose forces have been accused of human rights violations by civil rights groups, told Reuters: "We will punish any Palestinian who violates the law and any policeman who maltreats Palestinians will also be punished."

Israel, meanwhile, protested to the PNA Sunday against Col. Rajoub's call for Israeli settlers to get out of Hebron, an official said. "There is part of our city still bleeding and remains

under the occupation. There are among us 400 settlers, 400 stones laying on our chests," said Col. Rajoub.

A senior Israeli defence ministry official, who asked not to be identified, told journalists, "these statements are an incitement to violence which could lead to attacks on the Jewish community in Hebron."

"They are all the more serious as they came from a senior Palestinian official," in charge of security, he added.

Mr. Netanyahu, meanwhile, indicated he wanted the Palestinians to begin fulfilling what he said were their peace commitments.

Speaking on American television, Mr. Netanyahu said for the peace process to continue there had to be an end to Israel's "one-way giving."

He also said he hoped to resume peace talks with Syria but indicated no change of stance over the Golan Heights.

"We now have a blueprint on how to proceed (with the Palestinians). If we are going to proceed then we have got to end the situation of one-way giving by Israel and one-way receiving by the Palestinians. We fulfil our commitments, they fulfil theirs," Mr. Netanyahu said on "Fox News Sunday" television programme.

"It is not only Israel that has to keep its side of the agreement like the Hebron redeployment. But the Palestinian side has to keep their side of the agreement like annulling the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) charter that calls for Israel's destruction." He said on ABC's "This Week" programme that "a measure of compliance on one side should mean a measure of compliance on the other side."

Mr. Netanyahu, in his first American television interview since concluding the agreement on Hebron, said his government had not changed its stance on Jerusalem.

Haaretz reports September letter from Christopher

(Continued from page 1)

that his government has given its maximum to the peace process," said the paper.

The peace negotiations between Israel and Syria were suspended by Mr. Peres in February last year following a wave of militant suicide bombings in Israel.

Tension between the neighbours has been intense since Mr. Netanyahu took office four months later, with both sides accusing the other of planning military strikes.

Syria insists that any future peace deal must involve the return of the Golan, and was infuriated when Mr. Netanyahu announced a plan to expand

the Israeli settlements on the plateau.

In an interview on Israeli radio, a former Israeli negotiator, Itamar Rabinovich, revealed the Israeli conditions for a resumption of talks.

"What is needed is a mutual desire to advance the process," he said. "As soon as that situation exists, the formal conditions are no longer important."

"I saw as problematic the Syrian stance to return exactly to where talks broke off. You can't demand a new government keep the same political line as the previous one. If the Syrians will understand this, it will be possible to re-open negotiations," he said.

Sudan rebels claim killing 150 troops

(Continued from page 1)

throw of the country's government. Sudan's Alwan newspaper reported Sunday that some 3,000 rebels were preparing to attack government troops from Uganda.

Alwan, quoting unidentified security officials, said the rebels had some 20 armoured vehicles and weapons.

Meanwhile, Sudanese Vice-President Al Zubairi Mohammed Saleh arrived in Saudi Arabia on Sunday to discuss the fighting in his country, a Saudi official said.

The official declined to give further details.

Sudanese opposition leader Sadeq Al Mahdi is also visiting Saudi Arabia to make a pilgrimage to Mecca and could meet Saudi government officials, sources close to Mr. Mahdi said. But they did not say whether Mr. Mahdi might meet General Saleh.

Mr. Mahdi, a former prime minister and head of the northern opposition party Umma, refused to meet secretly with Mr. Saleh while he was in Cairo last week, the sources said.

Mr. Saleh is expected to deliver a message to Saudi Arabia's King Fahd from Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir about "developments in eastern Sudan," Sudanese diplomats said.

Abu Khajil freed on bail

(Continued from page 1)

stemming from a 1928 law related to slavery, Mr. Abu Khajil also faces several other charges including forgery of documents and official seals and illegal possession of firearms.

Two others are also standing trial along with Mr. Abu Khajil. All have entered not-guilty pleas.

The Sri Lankan government dismissed Mr. Abu

Khajil as its honorary consul shortly after he was arrested.

Newspapers are banned from publishing details of the trial proceedings under an order issued by the court. But reports in the local press said that at least two Sri Lankan witnesses, said to have been key to the prosecution case, had retracted their testimonies and "now face" perjury charges.

Desert centre plans genetic boost for camels

Camels are as crucial as they are cantankerous, with humps that can store water for days and feet adapted to walking on sand. Now scientists believe that genetic engineering can make the creatures still more efficient.

By Daniel Chan

LONDON — If the desert cannot be made to bloom, at least the animal best adapted to life in the arid wild can be made more productive.

That is the thinking behind a genetic-improvement plan for that "ship of the desert" — the camel.

"Camels can contribute much more to the economy and lifestyle of the desert people," believes Abdi Guliye, a Kenyan expert in camel physiology.

Improving the genetic stock of the cantankerous but desert-efficient beasts will produce better yields of meat, milk, wool and other by-products, he says.

"More camels should be propagated to make them widely available to farmers and herders," recommends Guliye, a disciple of camel geneticist Professor Reuven Yagil of Israel's Ben-Gurion University. "Camels can breed only one young in two years. But through hormone treatment, females can produce more eggs and these can be transferred to other surrogate camels."

Normally, it takes four years for camels to mature, he says, "but if nutrition is improved, they can start breeding when they are three."

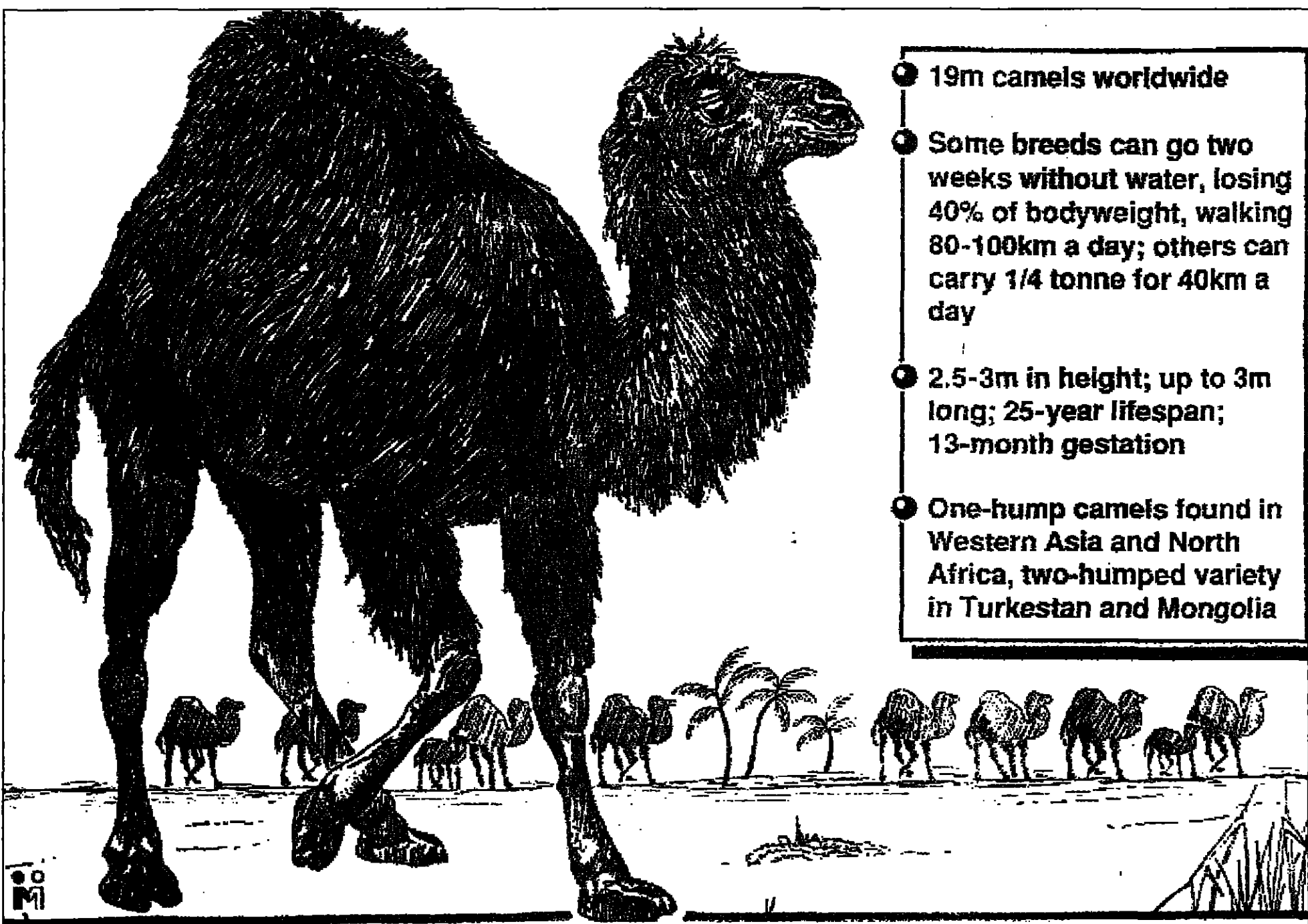
"As yet, they are an under-utilised asset in the fight against famine which affects people in the many rapidly expanding desert areas."

About 60 per cent of the world's estimated 19 million camels are to be found in eastern Africa, so officials from Eritrea say it is appropriate for a proposed Desert Animal Centre to be sited at Wekro, in their country's eastern lowlands.

In addition, agricultural economist-turned-diplomat Berhane Woldeassie Kelati has pointed out, Eritrea has a special need, because camel stocks have been severely depleted by long droughts and by the protracted war against Ethiopia, which culminated in the regaining of Eritrean independence in 1993.

The London-based United Kingdom Jewish Aid and International Development (UKJaid) — the charity responsible for finding the £400,000 needed for the Desert Animal Centre's first three years — says the hostile environmental conditions not only make life hard for the people living there, but also make it difficult to rehabilitate returning war refugees, many of whom are female-headed households.

"The centre is designed to improve the genetic stock and productivity of desert animals, in particular their milk and meat output," says UKJaid director Dr Georgia Kaufmann. "It is also to replenish the depleted stocks of animals of farmers there in as short a period as possible. Animal disease-control measures will be offered, too."



- 19m camels worldwide
- Some breeds can go two weeks without water, losing 40% of bodyweight, walking 80-100km a day; others can carry 1/4 tonne for 40km a day
- 2.5-3m in height; up to 3m long; 25-year lifespan; 13-month gestation
- One-hump camels found in Western Asia and North Africa, two-humped variety in Turkistan and Mongolia

"The genetic methodology involves adapting some of the techniques which have been successfully used on cattle — specifically hormone treatment and embryo transplants."

Professor Yagil, who first suggested the centre, will be its first head when funding has been secured. He

will be helped by staff of Ben-Gurion University, which specialises in desert agriculture.

If all goes to plan, local herders will be the first beneficiaries, because they will have access to veterinary services provided by the centre.

But Guliye emphasises

that, in time, the benefits may spread to wherever camels are used.

"In Kenya, tribes which keep cattle are gradually switching to camels where previously they did not have any," he says. "The world is faced with an expansion of deserts, partly due to cattle which dig their

hoofs into the soil, thus destroying it. Camels do not destroy the soil."

The monetary value of a camel in Kenya, he notes, is the equivalent of three cows, or 15 sheep or goats.

A second programme is planned for the Desert Animal Centre: help for the development of farming

skills among women in rural areas where wars have depleted the number of men. Many households rely entirely on female labour.

UKJaid has previously provided medical equipment for Kurdish and Somali refugees, an eye clinic for Zimbabwe and trauma-treatment instruc-

tion for teachers and social workers in Bosnia and Croatia.

Daniel Chan, a Malaysian journalist with the New Straits Times, is the winner of two entertainment journalism awards. This article is reprinted from the Gemini News Service.

Arab Gulf countries expect oil prices to remain firm in 1997

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states expect strong oil prices in 1997 to bring in billions of dollars in additional earnings and lift growth in their economies like 1996 prices did, experts said Sunday.

Although the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the world's main oil suppliers, believe 1996's 13-year price high will not be repeated this year, they are optimistic prices will remain firm.

"Gulf countries feel that 1997 will be an extension of last year in terms of strong oil prices and economic growth although not necessarily the same level," a Riyadh-based economic expert said by telephone. "You can see optimism in their statements, their budgets and their outlook outlined in some private reports. I think they have become even more hopeful after they saw the reports" about the freezing weather in the West, said the economist, who is close to Saudi oil and economy authorities.

An optimistic oil-price forecast was underscored in Saudi Arabia's 1997 budget, which assumed a minimum price of more than \$16.5 per barrel, indicating that the world's top oil producer does not expect prices to go below that level.

Experts said this was the first time in more than a decade that the Gulf kingdom has tailored its annual

budget to a relatively high price compared to past budget assumptions of \$14 to \$15 per barrel.

The higher oil prices anticipated by the Saudi budget, released two weeks ago, also took into account the return of sanction-hit Iraq to the oil market after an absence of more than six years.

Iraq began pumping more than 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude in mid-December under an agreement with the United Nations allowing Baghdad to raise \$2 billion every six months to buy food and medicine for its people.

The resumption of Iraqi oil exports pushed up the overall output of the 11-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to nearly 26.5 million bpd, far above its nominal ceiling of 25.03 million bpd.

The increased output has not affected crude prices, which remained higher than OPEC's target of \$21, mainly because of the Western cold spell.

"There are several factors that govern the oil market and prices," United Arab Emirates (UAE) acting oil minister Rakad bin Salim bin Rakad said last week. "But I expect 1997 to be a good year in terms of prices."

Oil prices in 1996 shot up to their highest average level of around \$20 per barrel since the end of the oil boom in early 1980s. This compares with around

\$16.8 in 1995 and \$15.5 in 1994.

The price rise brought the six GCC members more than \$12 billion in surplus funds, trimmed their budget deficits and boosted their gross domestic product by more than seven per cent, the highest in a decade.

Saudi Arabia and Oman, which rely heavily on crude export earnings, were encouraged to boost spending as they projected higher revenues. Bahrain, which has little oil, also forecast higher expenditures while Kuwait and Qatar have yet to release their budgets for fiscal 1997.

The UAE, where a budget deficit became a surplus in 1996, is expected to maintain a high expenditure level this year, officials said.

Economists said they expected high government spending in GCC states to trigger high growth rates as public expenditure still plays a major role in economic activity in the 16-year-old defence, political and economic alliance despite a growing tendency to give the private sector a greater role.

"1996 was one of the best years for the GCC economies as it was reminiscent of the oil boom," one expert said. "Barring unexpected developments, 1997 is seen as another good year that will combine with 1996 to make up for some economic damage caused by the Gulf War and ensuing weak oil prices."

Oil prices too low in real terms — expert

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Oil prices were too low in real terms in 1996 despite a rise in the price of oil to one of its highest nominal levels, according to a prominent Arab oil expert.

The price of OPEC's basket of seven crudes averaged around \$20.03 in 1996, but at 1973 dollar prices the barrel price was just \$5.61, said Nicolas Sarkis, head of the Paris-based Arab Oil Institute.

Mr. Sarkis, writing in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) economic weekly Emirates Today, said the 1996 price was the equivalent to less than one third of the \$17.15 price recorded during the oil boom in 1982.

"The decline in real oil prices after 1986 has not only undermined the gains of the so-called second oil shock but also eliminated around 43.1 per cent of the price increase during the first oil shock in 1974," he said.

Mr. Sarkis said the 1996 real price was much lower because of soaring inflation in recent years and the drop in the U.S. dollar against other currencies.

Oil exports by the 11-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) are officially priced in the U.S. dollar despite calls for the adoption of a basket of currencies to offset fluctuations in the value of the greenback.

The decline in both real and nominal prices of oil have hit Gulf producers hardest as they rely heavily on crude exports.

Mr. Sarkis said the oil price rise in 1996 boosted OPEC's income by \$24 billion to \$156.1 billion, but he added the revenues remained much lower in real terms than the 1983 earnings.

"The decline in OPEC's real income became more underscored after the increase in its crude exports from around 12.9 million barrels per day in 1985 to 22.3 million bpd in 1996 and a growth in the population of its member states from 369.9 million to 475 million," he said.

"These developments have caused destructive effects on the income and economies of those oil producers," he added.

Growth forecasts in Group of Ten countries improve

BASEL, Switzerland (AFP) — Growth forecasts have improved in the Group of Ten (G-10) countries. Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer said in Basel, speaking as chairman of the central bank governors' committee.

He said the panel's latest forecasts point to a "modest speed-up in real growth in 1997, and we expect a continuation of that development in 1998". The governors' new growth forecasts are a bit more optimistic than the ones they made at the start of last year, he said.

Inflation seems more or less under control in all G-10 countries, he said, and monetary policies are appropriate in the majority of them. But "inflation is never vanquished" and the central banks must remain on guard.

He did not make any references to the situation in specific countries.

On another point, Mr. Tietmeyer, speaking in connection with meetings at the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), said that the unemployment problem must receive special handling on the European continent.

He said that joblessness, "which is essentially structural, is worrisome in Europe — and while strong growth would improve the situation, one must also find specific responses to this problem", speaking in the name of all the G-10 central bank governors.

Exchange rates are not a cause for worry, he said, particularly if one considers the dollar's level against the European units.

Finally, Mr. Tietmeyer said he had been reappointed chairman of the central bank governors' committee, for a three-year term.

In another development, the Basel committee on bank inspection submitted a report on transparency of financial conglomerates, recommending cooperation between the banks' supervisory organs and the insurance companies. Mr. Tietmeyer said the report would be sent to G10 ministers.

Next week, the committee, which sits at the BIS, will publish three reports concerning the system of international payments in real time, clearing agreements for derivatives, and information relative to the international payments system.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.6190	0.5997	1.3990	117.30	1.3404	1670.42	1.8130	5.4580
DE Mark	0.6177	1.0000	0.3699	0.8637	72.47	0.8272	969.10	1.1194	3.3696
GB Sterling	1.6874	2.6985	1.0000	2.3241	195.60	2.2350	2618.52	3.0230	9.1007
CH Franc	0.7148	1.1568	0.4263	1.0000	83.88	0.9578	1122.73	1.2574	3.5401
JP Yen	0.0085	1.3779	0.5101	1.1908	1.0000	1.1408	123.37	1.5430	4.8451
CA Dollar	0.7460	1.2074	0.4470	1.0433	1.14	1.0000	1171.17	1.3521	4.0704
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0303	0.3814	0.8890	1339.94	0.8530	1.0000	1154	3.4753
NL Guilder	0.5516	89.27	0.3305	0.7715	64.79	0.7391	865.36	1.0000	3.0696
FR Franc	0.1632	0.2956	0.1098	0.2562	21.48	0.2456	33.21	33.2100	1.0000

Energy		
Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	23.25	23.95
WTI	22.25	25.40
Bony	23.25	23.95
Dubai	22.81	21.29
UL Gas	205.00	206.00

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	355.5	356
Silver (oz's)	4.77	4.79
Platinum (oz's)	360.6	361.8
Al (3 Months)	0	0
CU (3 Months)	2240	2245
Zinc (3 Months)	0	0
Lead (3 Months)	0	0
DI (3 Months)	0	0

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	127.58	Spot
Cocoa (5/ton)	1360	Spot
Sugar (5/ton)	305.5	Spot
Wheat (5/ton)	138	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	22.74	Spot
Tea (5/ton)	115	Spot
Barley (5/ton)	2.22	Spot
Rice (5/ton)	470	Spot

East Currencies					
	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	
	0.4321	0.15992	0.37318	31.3313	
	0.44125	0.16331	0.38107	31.9949	
	5.38503	1.99382	4.65116	390.623	
	0.29923	1.59084	3.71186	311.828	
	3.3382	1.2359	2.8846	241.881	
Currency Deposit Rates (Bids)					
	-3	-6	-9	-1	
	Months	Months	Months	Year	
	5.43	5.58	5.65	5.81	
	6.37	6.56	6.70	6.88	
	0.34	0.35	0.35	0.38	
	2.88	3.00	3.00	2.96	
	3.22	3.20	3.15	3.20	
	1.75	1.77	1.81	1.83	
	7.05	6.73	6.48	6.33	

Currency Deposit Rates (Bids)									
Period	1 - 3	3 - 6	6 - 9	9 - 12	12 - 18	18 - 24	24 - 36	36 - 48	48 - 60
USD	5.31	5.43	5.56	5.65	5.81				
GBP	6.00	6.37	6.56	6.80	7.07				
JPY	0.30	0.34	0.35	0.35	0.38				
DEM	2.88	2.88	3.00	3.00	3.25				
FRF	3.26	3.22	3.20	3.15	3.20				
CHF	1.67	1.75	1.77	1.77	1.83				
ITL	7.38	7.05	6.73	6.48	6.33				

* JOD Cross Rates

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Tourism in Egypt breaks record highs

CAIRO (R) — Egypt received a record 3.9 million tourists in 1996 and earned a record of more than \$3 billion from the industry in the financial year 1995/96, an official at the tourism ministry said Sunday.

"A total of 3,895,942 tourists visited Egypt in 1996, 24.3 per cent more than the figure for 1995," the director general of the ministry's technical office, Sayyed Mehrez,

told Reuters. Tourists spent \$3,009.1 million over 23.76 million nights in the financial year, which ended on June 30, Mr. Mehrez added.

Their expenditure was \$2.3 million during 20.45 million nights in the previous financial year, he said.

The government said in a statement to parliament last month that it aimed to increase the number of tourists to 4.2 million in

the financial year 1997/98.

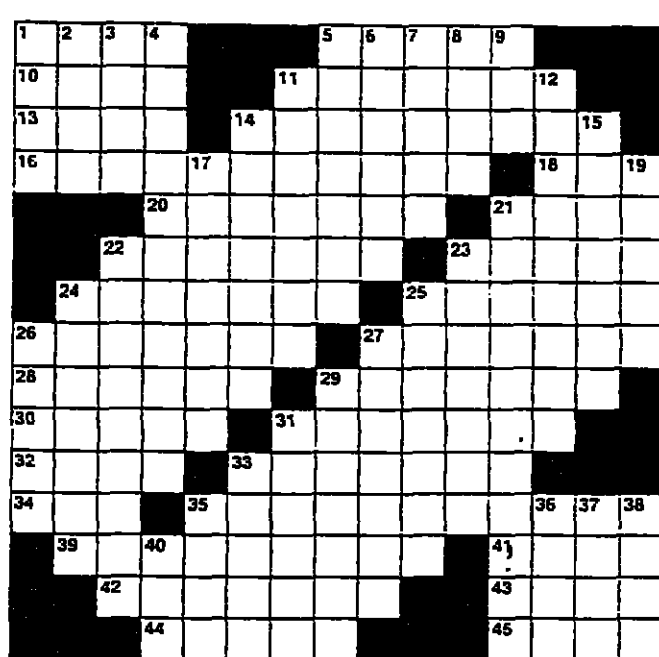
Tourism in the 1995 calendar year had already matched the record-breaking year 1992. Attacks on tourist targets by militants had led to a slump in 1993 and 1994.

Tourism is Egypt's third largest source of foreign exchange, after remittances from Egyptians abroad and visible exports.

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Easy job
- 5 Volumes
- 10 Humdinger
- 11 Certain boat
- 13 Cupid
- 14 NT good guy
- 16 Foretold
- 18 — of luxury
- 20 Ensured
- 21 Ceremony
- 22 Bracelets
- 23 Theatrical
- 24 Manages
- 25 Determine the
- 26 Risked
- 27 Disproves
- 28 "— Restaurant"
- 29 Explained
- 30 Geriatrics of
- 31 Foretold, in a
- 32 Bio subj.
- 33 Abusive one
- 34 Rec room
- 35 Rescue from
- 39 Sang love
- 41 Sped
- 42 Provided with
- 43 Wicked
- 44 Lesser
- 45 Smidgens



by Roger Jurgovan

GAISP	HALAIS	APSE
ATILI	ALIONE	FICAL
MOIOG	RIATIA	OUDS
APPILEO	FIDISCOR	
AXLIE	HAIT	
ROIDTED	RTIES	SAD
ASTI	GUILLT	TRI
JIOHINIA	APPIEISIE	ED
ALIE	AEDIE	ORAIN
HEIR	VIAGE	ARRIST
SAIR	DIRAT	
APPILEO	OFONEISE	YIE
BRIE	NIOBIE	OIBEY
ANINIA	DEILIS	URGE
REEK	SIKES	TIGS

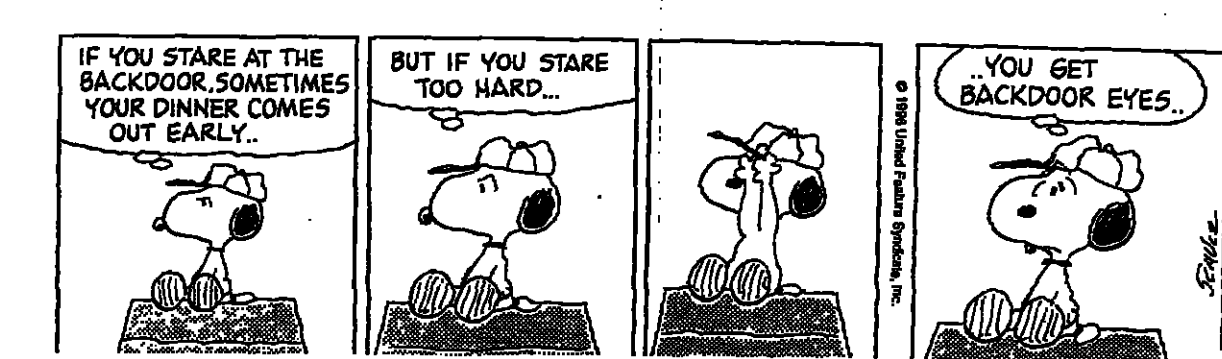
DOWN

- 1 Certain
- 2 — Pompius
- 3 "Thanks —!"
- 4 Morally strict
- 5 Mexican dishes
- 6 Takes to the
- 7 Stuck in mud
- 8 OK city
- 9 Posed
- 11 Pressed
- 12 Produced mouth
- 14 Bills

- 15 Good— (easygoing)
- 17 Tapers
- 19 Looks secretly
- 21 Compensated
- 22 Operatic voices
- 23 Machine for
- 24 Spirals
- 25 Sullied
- 26 Prepared
- 27 Resurrected
- 29 Partition

- 31 Part of FDR
- 33 Kidney enzyme
- 35 Gotham eatery
- 36 Bossa —
- 37 Stall
- 38 Congers
- 40 Motor rating
- letters

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR MONDAY JANUARY 20, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't allow a secret concern prevent you today from handling your responsibilities. Sat nothing which could later this evening start a distracting disagreement with your mate. Avoid any delays in you becoming successful.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you help a friend with a difficulty today, be sure to remain objective and don't allow the difficulty to become yours. Be polite in conversations and be tactful in your business dealings for the days ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be exact when handling business and credit matters. This will get your week off to a good start. Don't ask any big favours today, however, wait until after this evening and try again, thereby you can become successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is not an opportune time today to begin any new projects, so wait until a more appropriate period. Don't listen to advice you don't respect or you could be in much difficulty. Enjoy your home and family tonight.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be sure to stick "to the letter" today when dealing with contracts or agreements so that you don't experience any difficulties. Think of your true feelings to avoid a disagreement with your mate. Tone down your attitude.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A fellow associate is apt to be stubborn today, so drop the subject until a better time. This is not a good day to get into any public or charity activities. Avoid disagreements with close friends which could create hostility.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You may find it difficult today to get your surroundings in the order you want, so concentrate on your personal well-being and be happy through the enjoyment of a hobby, which can be relaxing and relieve stress.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A troubled friend could upset you today, however, be kind since this person is sick in some manner and needs your assistance. Don't indulge in an expensive pleasure so that you can keep your poise and avoid any difficulties.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If a close friend has difficulties today, be a good listener. Show your devotion and create some harmony with him or her. This is not a good day or evening for entertaining guests, at home, so wait until another time.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Use great care when driving on the highway, so that you avoid any difficulties. Avoid any people who like to disagree. This is a good time to make new friends since they can be helpful to your career activities.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Plan how you'll get your financial ideas across to others today, however, don't take any action yet. You may have a unique and profitable idea, so guard it very carefully and make presentation when the moment is right.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) See if you can today get out of a foolish promise you've made, however, be tactful. This is not a good day to force your way into new relationships and take it easy and get some rest for in the days ahead they will be busy.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

AMMAN — (Lac) knowledge and info tion about credit in mous. absence of cialised women-c organisations and in cent guarantees to qu for credit are ref behind the low numb women who enjoy c in Jordan, according study.

The study, conducted Saud Al Tayeb from v University, showed although the demand credit increased 342 cent between 1991 1996 due to higher lev education and a high

Daily

A review of ne

Agel sees 1 dinar stabi levels

** MUFLEH AQEL Bank, expects the str cies to continue this the economic adju despite the continuat sees interest rates on current levels as a dinar-denominated denominated in fore would be consolidi dinars and foreign cu. only can depend upc Agel stressed.

Mr. Agel said the Jo achieve real growth expected rates. He po mations show that gr 5.2 per cent at fixed prices) despite registe rate which, at 5.6 per able levels though sl achieved in the past fi

Despite recording building an adequate and narrowing the bu ed that Jordan was no trade deficit which, t result of an imbalan exports and imports. minor deviations, the remained within the t

Mr. Agel expected t form better this year d some economic acco the planned targets. H towards political stabl be consolidated and Jo boost its exports.

In general, Mr. Agel ed to achieve positive the aspired goal of 6.5 (Al Dustour).

THE BETTER HA

GLASBERGEN



"I don't need t pages. I get from bum

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RUJOR

YAGIL

BALIVE

CUNBOE

Print answer here:

Saturday's Jumbles: TAPID Answer: What is dog - H

Study examines reasons for low volume of credit extension to women in Jordan

By Lola Keilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Lack of knowledge and information about credit institutions, absence of specialised women-credit organisations and insufficient guarantees to qualify for credit are reasons behind the low number of women who enjoy credit in Jordan, according to a study.

The study, conducted by Saud Al Tayeb from Mu'ta University, showed that although the demand for credit increased 342 per cent between 1991 and 1996 due to higher level of education and a high ratio

of unemployment among women, the number of women who actually received credit was still relatively low when compared to the number of men who obtained loans.

As an example, Dr. Tayeb quoted Agriculture Credit Corporation figures which showed that credit to women jumped from 4.8 per cent of the total in 1991 to 11.4 per cent in 1994. Nevertheless, he added, women's share in obtaining credit is still low.

He explained that the reasons behind the low

volume were the absence of a specialised women-credit institutions and insufficient guarantees to qualify for credit from different funds. Dr. Tayeb pointed out that although Jordan has a number of credit institutions, like the Queen Alia Fund (QAF), and the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) both institutions were not women-oriented.

"The QAF gives credit to both men and women and the NHF gives credit generally to underprivileged families," said Dr. Tayeb.

The strategy of the study, sponsored by the Development and Employment Fund, followed two methods. The first was based on data collected

from special credit institutions in terms of the amount and quality of credit given to women during the past years. The second was in the form of a questionnaire distributed to 2,000 women all over the country with varying levels of education.

In the questionnaire, the women stated 4,608 answers concerning the problems they face in obtaining credit. The problems could be summarised as follows: 91 per cent wrote that it was due to the lack of information about credit establishments, 68.5 per cent complained from the absence of women-credit institutions, 62.5 per cent said social barriers were the major obstacles

which stood in their way. To overcome these problems, Dr. Tayeb recommended that both the radio and television stations be used to inform women about the availability of credit and credit establishments, especially the Business and Professional Women Club (BPWC), the NHF and the Development and Employment Fund. He also proposed that these institutions should be responsible for creating specialised units for women, as well as organising women training courses.

"I believe that both the BPWC and the NHF have the potentials for carrying out such a task, especially that the survey showed

that 56.1 per cent of the women preferred dealing with a women-oriented credit establishment," Dr. Tayeb said.

The study also showed that 15.1 per cent of the 1,021 women who were seeking loans to run their own projects, have failed to obtain such a credit. Dr. Tayeb attributed their failure to the financial laws and legislations which, according to him, discriminate against women.

"Unfortunately, our financial laws discourage women to run their own private projects," he said, adding that although women can run projects more efficiently than men, they are unable to make any progress in financing

their projects without the help of a male relative." The study categorised women's professions into the following four types: householder (22.2 per cent), government employees (14.1 per cent), private sector (14.1 per cent) and 49.6 per cent as job-seekers. This implies that the majority of the surveyed were either householders or are looking for a job. However, the questionnaire shows that 336 of the householders would like to start their own private business.

The study also showed that the surveyed women, 80 per cent of whom are under forty years old, would like to run projects mainly in the field of agriculture (31.9 per cent), industry (26 per cent) and services (25.9 per cent). Other suggested projects were kindergartens, beauty saloons and other commercial enterprises (16.2 per cent).

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Aqel sees interest rates on dinar stabilising at current levels during '97

** MUFLEH AQEL, a senior banker at the Arab Bank, expects the strict financial and monetary policies to continue this year to achieve the targets of the economic adjustment programme. However, despite the continuation of such policies, Mr. Aqel sees interest rates on Jordanian dinars stabilising at current levels as a result of indications showing dinar-denominated assets gaining over those denominated in foreign currencies. "This stability would be consolidated by adequate liquidity of dinars and foreign currencies that the national economy can depend upon to finance its growth," Mr. Aqel stressed.

Mr. Aqel said the Jordanian economy continued to achieve real growth in 1996 though at less than expected rates. He pointed out that preliminary estimations show that gross domestic product grew by 5.2 per cent at fixed prices (10.8 per cent at current prices) despite registering a slightly higher inflation rate which, at 5.6 per cent, was still within acceptable levels though slightly higher than what was achieved in the past few years.

Despite recording positive results in terms of building an adequate \$650m of foreign exchange and narrowing the budget deficit, Mr. Aqel indicated that Jordan was not successful in narrowing the trade deficit which, to the contrary, widened as a result of an imbalance between the growth of exports and imports. He said that except for some minor deviations, the overall economic indicators remained within the targets.

Mr. Aqel expected the Jordanian economy to perform better this year despite the minor deviations in some economic accomplishments during 1996 from the planned targets. He said that as the region moves towards political stability, the economic growth will be consolidated and Jordan will especially be able to boost its exports.

In general, Mr. Aqel concluded, Jordan is expected to achieve positive results that correspond with the aspired goal of 6.5 per cent real growth in 1997 (Al Dustour).

Oil price risk seen in Asia's rosy economic growth forecast

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Rosy projections of economic growth in Asia may be off the mark because planners have based forecasts on conservative estimates of crude oil prices, a Singapore petroleum industry journal has warned.

"While high oil prices are not a foregone conclusion, these forecasts do not consider the impact to the economies of oil at \$25 per barrel instead of \$18," said the monthly Strategist Oil Report.

It cautioned in its January issue that inflation, budget deficits and balance of payments could become "serious problems" for some Asian economies in a higher-oil-price environment.

Crude oil prices are at present hovering at \$23-\$25. They rose to \$20-\$25 for most of 1996 even though analysts had forecast prices of around \$18.

Most analysts believe the market would return to between \$18 and \$20 this year and hold steady up to 2000 as healthy oil demand growth will be met by equally strong supply.

The Strategist also questioned at what oil price level the World Bank made its recent forecast that East Asia's current economic slowdown was temporary.

"Expert opinion read the market wrongly for 1996, causing more than just inconvenience to a few energy-deficit and generally less than affluent countries in Asia and around the world."

"What if expert opinions are off the market again for 1997 and beyond? With oil at \$18-\$20, East Asia is probably on course to achieve World Bank-forecast prosperity. At \$25, the picture could look a lot different," the Strategist said.

With Asia's key economies net-importing some 11.6 million barrels per day, most of them from the Middle East, the outflow of capital from the region would be roughly \$4.2 billion a year for every \$1 per barrel increase, according to the Strategist.

"Should prices stay at around \$23 dollars per barrel for 1997, these economies would be spending at least \$20 billion more on oil imports compared with 1995," it said.

It added that even if oil prices did fall in early 1997 on seasonal influences, "the likelihood of them staying low over the next three years is open to question."

The Strategist said that based on a forecast by the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA), world consumption would expand by between six and eight million barrels per day from 1997 to 2000.

This was unlikely to be met by oil-producing countries, it said, adding that the Organisation for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) could seek a higher target price in the coming years.

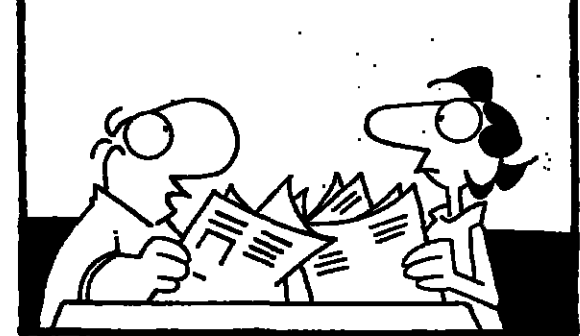
The Strategist said that for the energy-deficit countries, oil prices' rise had so far not affected economic growth but could pose problems if it was sustained for a few more years.

"The challenge of ensuring high economic growth rates under a scenario of high oil prices will be felt most in the less well-off developing countries India, the Philippines and even China," it said.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 19/01/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	PERCENT	PERCENT
261.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	14.1	1.36	6	46370	259.00	259.00	1.50	0.58	0.58
3.660	2.900	BANK OF JORDAN	11.2	0.00	6	1119	35.00	35.00	1.00	2.86	2.86
1.210	0.880	MID-EAST INV. BK.	74.9	0.00	30	63750	1.15	1.15	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.700	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.2	6.11	2	200	2.50	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.250	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.5	2.95	2	165	77.00	77.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.950	2.540	JOR. KUPAT BANK	14.1	0.00	2	165	434.00	434.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.090	0.800	JOR. GULF BANK	8.8	7.22	111	35250	318.57	318.57	0.00	0.00	0.00
4.180	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.9	0.00	4	3583	123.00	123.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.450	1.000	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	5	3974	51.17	51.17	0.00	0.00	0.00
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 195.80	CHNG: -0.36	71	108410	177570				
2.830	1.430	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.4	10.42	1	150	288	288	1.92	0.67	0.67
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 120.44	CHNG: 0.00	1	150	288				
1.830	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.3	7.36	11	3400	555.7	555.7	1.64	0.29	0.29
9.250	7.800	JOR. HOTEL TOURISM	17.7	1.99	1	15000	123750	8.25	0.67	0.55	0.55
1.720	1.000	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	18	7050	8679	1.24	0.14	0.14	0.14
1.050	0.920	REAL ESTATE INV.	20.2	0.00	29	32350	29734	7.40	2.50	2.50	2.50
1.060	0.980	JORDAN INTEL. TRAD.	21.8	0.00	2	500	310	310	0.00	0.00	0.00
10.300	7.600	ALRAI	9.3	6.33	1	50	395	395	7.90	2.00	2.00
2.200	1.490	MID-EAST HOTELS	6.5	3.94	1	100	625	625	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.720	3.130	ARAB INTEL. INV. EDUC.	14.1	5.62	8	1200	4270	3.55	0.84	0.70	0.70
1.220	0.960	SARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	5	2015	2115	1.06	0.05	0.05	0.05
1.250	0.920	UNIFIED READY WEAR	11.3	0.00	1	2000	4306	2.16	0.51	0.51	0.51
1.200	0.820	UNION LAND DEV.	2	0.00	1	100	85	85	0.00	0.00	0.00
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 111.46	CHNG: -0.24	88	67415	184870				
3.730	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.2	2.98	6	1209	4058	3.37	0.84	0.70	0.70
6.000	4.740	ARAB PAPER CO.	17.4	3.48	5	2100	12584	1.71	0.14	0.14	0.14
10.400	8.720	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	10.0	8.11	5	1320	13003	7.31	0.56	0.42	0.42
3.650	3.050	INDUSTRIAL COM. AGR.	15.6	0.00	4	615	1630	2.68	0.44	0.36	0.36
4.730	3.040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	20.2	5.45	17	5635	20782	2.67	0.13	0.13	0.13
3.450	2.450	JOR. ALUM. IND.	7.0	1.00	5	625	1000	6.10	1.94	1.94	1.94
2.330	1.970	JOR. PAPER MANFCT.	9.0	7.41	5	1350	2175	1.62	0.75	0.75	0.75
21.600	6.400	ARAB CHEM. DISTRB.	22.9	3.87	1	50	420	8.40	1.68	1.68	1.68
1.550	1.060	KACHERA INVEST.	13.5	4.04	3	108	534	0.95	0.18	0.18	0.18
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.9	8.33	1	2500	5000	3.60	0.72	0.72	0.72
0.960	0.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	8	9500	3640	1.63	0.17	0.17	0.17
1.440	1.060	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	8.0	0.00	42	53100	63178	1.17	0.18	0.18	0.18
1.680	1.180	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	4	16000	22140	1.27	0.23	0.23	0.23
1.020	0.540	NATIONAL INDS.	10.1	8.82	25	29000	19770	0.69	0.23	0.23	0.23
1.580	0.930	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEN.	9	0.00	23	7400	8247	1.09	0.15	0.15	0.15
3.250	2.280	UNIV. CHEM. INDS.	73.5	0.00	1	150	417	2.03	2.78	2.78	2.78
4.510	3.430	ALADDIN CO.	22.3	3.01	2	159710	637243	4.20	0.66	0.66	0.66
1.720	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEN.	28.1	0.00	35	12250	18447	1.49	1.20	1.20	1.20
1.550	1.060	KACHERA INVEST.	39.5	4.10	1	100	510	1.13	1.10	1.10	1.10
1.190	0.740	UNIV. CHEM. INDS.	5.2	11.63	14	5050	8686	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72
1.930	1.140	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	17.2	0.00	52	25650	34525	1.35	0.53	0.53	0.53
1.390	0.860	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	25.5	0.00	11	8450	7543	0.94	0.11	0.11	0.11
2.460	1.750	EL. INST. READY WEAR	9	0.00	1	1900	3515	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.85
1.380	0.980	INTEL. TOBACCO	29.9	0.00	0.14	7600	9609	1.25	0.27	0.27	0.27
1.580	0.930	UNION CH. & VEG.	24.9	0.00	12	7774	7775	0.96	0.01	0.01	0.01
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 115.14	CHNG: -0.29	299	354419	901968				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 153.22	CHNG: -0.09	459	530394	1264695				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 19/01/1997											
0.890	0.700	UNION INV. 50%	68.9	0.00	4	9550	2101	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72
0.960	0.700	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	10	12400	5580	0.46	0.37	0.37	0.37
0.960	0.700	AL-BANQIYAH 75%	15.4	0.00	4	4232	1852	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68
1.640	1.180	JOR. INDS. INVEST-JENCO	0	0.00	16	13150	3928	0.30	0.23	0.23	0.23
0.800	0.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	2	0.00	5	3000	1940	0.65	0.64	0.64	0.64
1.730	1.100	NATL. CHOCOLATE	2	0.00	5	10980	15371	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40
0.690	0.450	JORDAN INTEL. INV. TRD.	0	0.00	10	8500	4155	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49
0.900	0.520	NATL. TEXTILE	2	0.00	3	3750	945	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34
0.940	0.400	NATL. MULT. ENG. NAMCO	2	0.00	12	27600	14069	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51
0.990	0.720	JORDAN STEEL	0	0.00	10	21750	16530	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76
1.330	1.020	UNION TOBACCO 75%	2	0.00	6	2250	1758	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04
0.770	0.70	RASH PHARM. 65%	2	0.00	13	26550	6903	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61
0.770	0.090	IND. INV.	27.7	0.00	42	101750	64885	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43
0.820	0.590	NATL. POULTRY	2	0.00	10	31126	22974	0.70	0.74	0.74	0.74
0.950	0.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.7	0.00	43	97900	64385	0.65	0.66	0.66	0.66
GRAND TOTAL			123	372488	207112						

THE BETTER HALF.

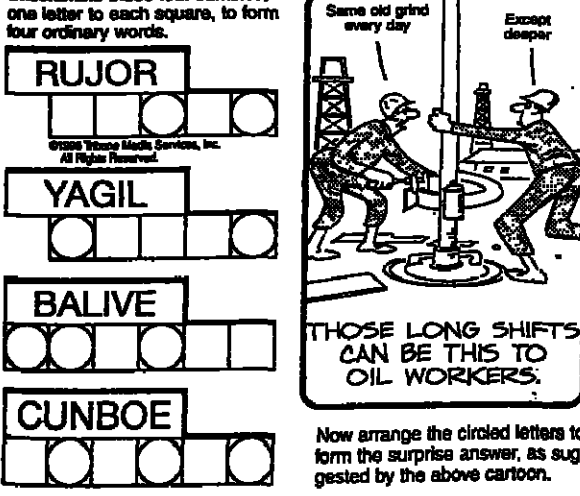
By Glasbergen



"I don't need to read the opinion pages. I get all my opinions from bumper stickers."

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: _____

Australian Open

Graf, Martinez wilt in the heat; Pierce, Chang advance

MELBOURNE (R) — German tennis queen Steffi Graf and other top female players wilted on Sunday as searing summer heat hit the Australian Open.

Graf's campaign for a fifth Australian Open title was brought to an abrupt end by a combination of in-form South African Amanda Coetzer and court-side temperatures of up to 50 degrees Celsius.

Graf's 6-2 7-5 fourth-round defeat was her worst performance in Melbourne since she lost in the third round aged 14 in 1984.

The top seed, who was treated for heat exhaustion after the match, has had the shadow of her father's trial on tax evasion charges hanging over her here. The prosecution has asked a German court to jail Peter Graf for six years and nine months and a verdict in the case is expected on Friday.

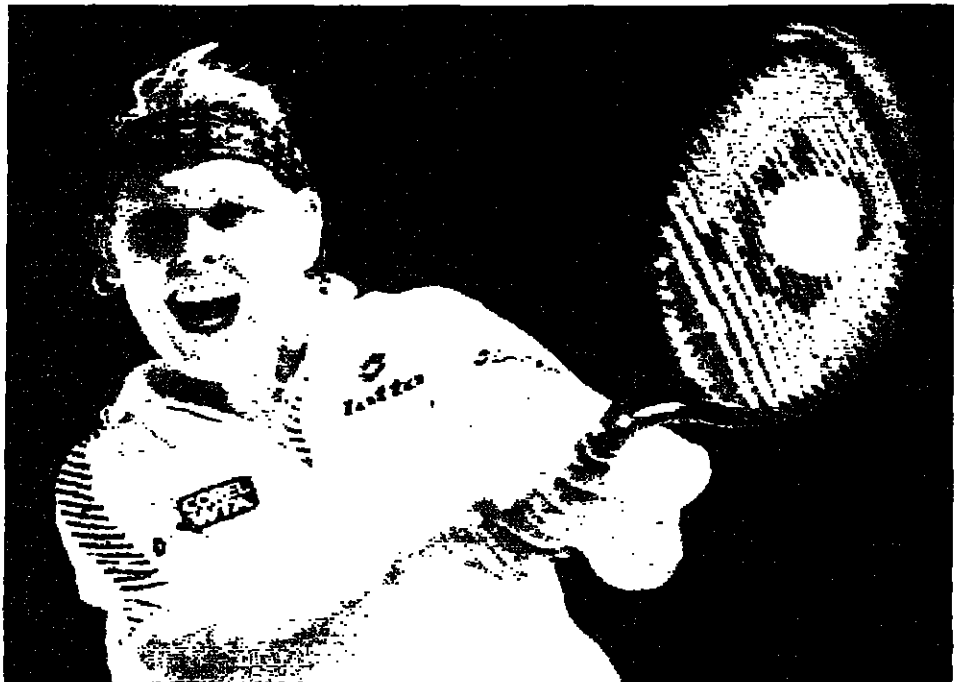
Graf was the biggest casualty on a day of upsets and followed fifth-seeded compatriot Anke Huber, Spain's third seed Conchita Martinez and American seventh seed Lindsay Davenport out of the tournament.

"We're all human...it was really nasty out there," said Martinez, adding that the temperatures were probably the highest she had faced in her nine-year career.

"It could be dangerous. I don't know. That question is for a doctor," she added.

The woman to benefit most on Sunday was 16-year-old Swiss Martina Hingis, who was enjoying a rest day in the singles. The number four seed is now clear favourite to become the youngest Grand Slam champion in the history of professional tennis.

Tour officials said it was the first time since tennis became open to profession-



Germany's Anke Huber in action during her fourth round loss to France's Mary Pierce at the Australian Open. Huber, the number five seed, lost in straight sets 6-2 6-3 (Reuters photo)

als in 1968 that the top three women's seeds had not made it to the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam event. Number two seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain lost on Saturday.

Coetzer, the number 12 seed, broke Graf on her first two service games and held on to take the first set 6-2.

Graf, who has made hesitant starts all week, fought back to build up a 4-0 lead in the second set.

Then she started to wilt, letting the tenacious Coetzer back into the game. Graf did not speak to reporters after the game but a statement said she had been treated for heat exhaustion and had also been suffering from an infected toe.

In the statement, Graf paid tribute to Coetzer: "She played really well today. I tried everything I could. I tried as hard as I

could. I just didn't have the energy with the heat. But I give her credit, she handled the conditions really well."

Martinez appeared to be heading for an easy win against 16th seed Sabine Appelmans of Belgium after winning the first set 6-2 and serving for the match at 5-4 in the second.

Then the heat took its toll. She went down 2-6 7-5 6-1 in the most remarkable turnaround in the tournament.

Number five seed Huber, who lost in the final last year to American Monica Seles, was completely outclassed in losing 6-2 6-3 to former champion Mary Pierce, who also beat her in the fourth round on her way to the title in 1995.

American seventh seed Lindsay Davenport was beaten by unseeded compatriot Kimberly Po 7-6 6-4 in a tight match marked by a

15-13 first-set tie-break.

Graf's defeat may allow her to return home to Germany for the end of her father's trial.

In the men's draw, American Michael Chang dropped the first set to Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev then closed him out of the game to win 4-6 6-2 6-2 6-1.

Chang, the World No. 2, will now meet ninth seeded Chilean Marcelo Rios, who defeated Swede Thomas Enqvist, the seventh seed, 4-6 6-4 7-6 6-7 6-3 on Sunday.

Spanish baseliners Felix Mantilla and Carlos Moya secured quarter-final berths against each other.

Mantilla beat Malivai Washington of the United States 7-5 6-2 6-1 and Moya won in five sets, 6-3 1-6 3-6 6-2 6-4, over Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman.

Path opens up for historic Hingis victory

MELBOURNE (R) — Barring yet another upset on the Melbourne centre court, Switzerland's Martina Hingis is on course to earn a place in tennis history at the Australian Open.

The defeat on Sunday of a host of top women's seeds, including Germany's World No. 1 Steffi Graf, leaves the number four seed with an ever clearer path to next Saturday's women's final.

If she makes it, the 16-year-old will become the youngest Grand Slam champion since tennis became open to professionals in 1968. She would be probably the second youngest ever after Lottie Dod, who won the first of five Wimbledon titles in 1887 at the age of 15, although the amateur record books are full of gaps.

But even with Graf, Conchita Martinez and Anke Huber out of the way, Hingis still has four tough matches in prospect. Another upset could easily happen.

According to the seedings, Romania's Irina Spirlea should be her hardest opponent. The number eight seed from Bucharest is not a Grand Slam specialist but has dropped only one set on her way to the fourth round.

But a tougher opponent, if Hingis can dispose of Romanian Ruxandra Dragomir in the fourth round on Monday, would be Slovakia's Karina Habsudova. Spirlea's opponent on Monday, Ninth seed Habsudova is



Martina Hingis

known to strike fear into Slovak-born Hingis.

Other names in Hingis's half of the draw include American Mary Joe Fernandez, the 14th seed, and 15th-seeded American Chanda Rubin.

Rubin, 20, was a losing semifinalist last year and has enchanted the Melbourne crowds with her attacking blend of tennis.

Even with the big names gone — Graf, Martinez, Huber and Lindsay Davenport — the top half of the draw still appears to hold promise.

Two players in particular stand out — South African 12th seed Amanda Coetzer and France's Mary Pierce.

Coetzer on Sunday played the match of her life to beat Graf in the fourth round, breaking her first two services to take the first set 6-2 and then coming back from 4-0 down in the second to win the game 6-2 7-5 as Graf wilted in the heat (see separate story).

Pierce, the 1995 champion, had an easier time of it against fifth seed Huber on Sunday, beating her 6-2 6-2. Pierce has dropped only 11 games in her past three matches and the aggressive, athletic game which helped her to win two years ago seems to have returned.

Pierce's form has been at best erratic since her

Melbourne triumph. Her best Grand Slam result was reaching the quarter-finals at Wimbledon last year. A troublesome shoulder injury also affected her training.

Pierce, who was born in Canada of a French mother but is now based in Florida, decided last year to take a break. She worked on her body, rested and had daily treatment on her shoulder but did not touch a tennis racket for three months.

"I feel fitter and I feel healthy and happy and I'm enjoying what I'm doing," the 22-year-old said Sunday. "And I feel every day I'm improving with every match."

Unknown Slovak to meet World No. 1 Sampras today

MELBOURNE (R) — World No. 1 Pete Sampras steps on to centre court at the Australian Open on Monday to face a man he has said he will not even recognise — Slovakian teenager Dominik Hrbaty.

Hrbaty, a 19-year-old from Bratislava, last year made the biggest ranking jump of any player in the top 100, soaring 287 places to finish the year at 77.

His dream run at the Open is likely to come to an end in the fourth round. Sampras looked

on peak form when he beat Australian Mark Woodforde in the third round on Saturday.

Also measuring up on Monday will be 15th seed Chanda Rubin, the popular American who takes on Belgian giant-killer Dominique Van Roost. Van Roost ousted Spanish second seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario on Saturday.

New women's favourite Martina Hingis, hoping at 16 to become the youngest professional Grand Slam champion ever,

meets 27th-ranked Ruxandra Dragomir of Romania in a feature match on Monday night. Dragomir beat Austrian 11th seed Judith Wiesner in the first round.

But the last match of the day will doubtless be the longest.

American marathon man Jim Courier, double Australian Open champion, faces Austrian fifth seed Thomas Muster under the floodlights of centre court.

LAS VEGAS (R) — Unbeaten World Boxing Council super lightweight champion Oscar De La Hoya continued on course for a string of lucrative title-unification fights by battering former champion Miguel Angel Gonzalez to win by unanimous decision Saturday.

While De La Hoya stepped up to the challenge posed by the formidable Mexican, International Boxing Federation junior flyweight champion Michael Carbajal was shocked by Colombian Mauricio Pastrana in a split decision.

Undeclared junior welterweight champion Kostya Tszyu, a native Russian now fighting out of Australia, retained his IBF junior welterweight crown but suffered the first blemish on his record in the process.

Tszyu hammered Puerto Rican Leonardo Mas, knocking him down twice in the first round, but in the final seconds of the opening round, Tszyu hit Mas as referee Joe Cortez was stepping in to break up the fighters.

The punch, ruled unintentional, broke the jaw of Mas, who could not continue. It was ruled an "accidental foul" and left Tszyu's record at 18-0-1. Mas (23-

De La Hoya and Tszyu keep titles, Carbajal beaten



Oscar De La Hoya raises his arms in victory after a 12-round WBC super lightweight title defence against Miguel Angel Gonzalez of Mexico in the Thomas & Mack Centre in Las Vegas. De La Hoya won by unanimous decision (Reuters photo)

2-1) 15 kos) is ranked ninth by the IBF and was fighting for his first major world title.

De La Hoya put on a boxing clinic as he used a dead-on jab and series of left hooks to build a big early lead and answer any questions about the strength of his left shoulder. A case of tendinitis had kept De La Hoya out of the ring since June.

Gonzalez, who had points deducted in the seventh and 12th rounds, was never in the fight. Judge John Keane of England scored the bout 117-111.

Anek Hongtongkam of Thailand had it 117-110 and Nob Logist of Belgium 117-109.

De La Hoya improved to 23-0 with 20 wins within the distance. Gonzalez lost for the first time in 42 career bouts.

Pastrana, the top-ranked contender, used strong combinations and relentless determination to edge Carbajal and capture the title in his first try.

Carbajal, who fell to 44-3, did little to earn the close verdict. Pastrana (16-0) had Carbajal wobble in the third round of a bout in which neither fighter landed many power punches.

Australian Open order of play for Monday (x denotes seeding)

Centre Court (1045 AEDT/2345GMT): Pete Sampras (USA X1) Vs Dominik Hrbaty (Svk) Chanda Rubin (USA X15) Vs Dominique Van Roost (Bel) Albert Costa (Spa X10) Vs Wayne Ferreira (Rsa X8)

1900AEDT (0800 GMT): Ruxandra Dragomir (Rom) Vs Martina Hingis (Svi X4) Jim Courier (USA X11) Vs Thomas Muster (Aut X5)

Show Court 1 (1100AEDT/2300GMT): Goran Ivanisevic (Cro X3) Vs Christian Ruud (Nor) Patty Schnyder (Svi) Vs Mary Joe Fernandez (USA X14)

Show Court 2 (1100AEDT/2300GMT): Irina Spirlea (Rom X8) Vs Karina Habsudova (Svk X9)

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA "1" A Rob Cohen film Sylvester Stallone in DAYLIGHT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA "2" Richard Gere, Sean Connery & Julia Ormond....in FIRST KNIGHT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:698238 PLAZA * RANSOM starring Mel Gibson Shows: 12:00, 2:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" BAD BOYS Shows: 12:15, 2:15, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 ***** CONCORD "2" Coming Soon... "Custom made Citizen" The satirical play starring Mousa Hijazin	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 Ramadan specials by Nabil & Hisham starting Jan. 22 Wed., Thurs., & Fri. For reservations please call 640155, 625155

Atlanta Hawks DB Milwaukee Bucks A Omni Atlanta won 5

Piston

LOS ANGELES (R) — Hill notched his second double of the season and Long made a layup with 20 seconds to go to Detroit Pistons to a 1 double-overtime win Saturday over the Lakers.

Hill poured in 34 points, 15 rebounds and a career-high seven for Detroit, and he came into overtime by making a three-pointer at the 1:30 mark to make it 80-80 at the end of regulation.

Both teams managed to escape in the first extra minute period. Long's

with 19.7 seconds left a second overtime finally Pistons (28-0) ahead to 81-80.

"It was tremendous. I proud of our guys," Detroit coach Doug Collins said. "Hill was sensational. He's the best player in the right now. He's the MVP."

"I guess it was the best of my pro career," Hill said. "We knew our backs against the wall coming here. We have a lot of heart. It was fun because Magic Johnson was in the stands. I was beginning to think we would never beat

GOR WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HIRSH

ANSWERS TO Q1: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q2: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q3: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q4: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q5: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q6: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q7: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

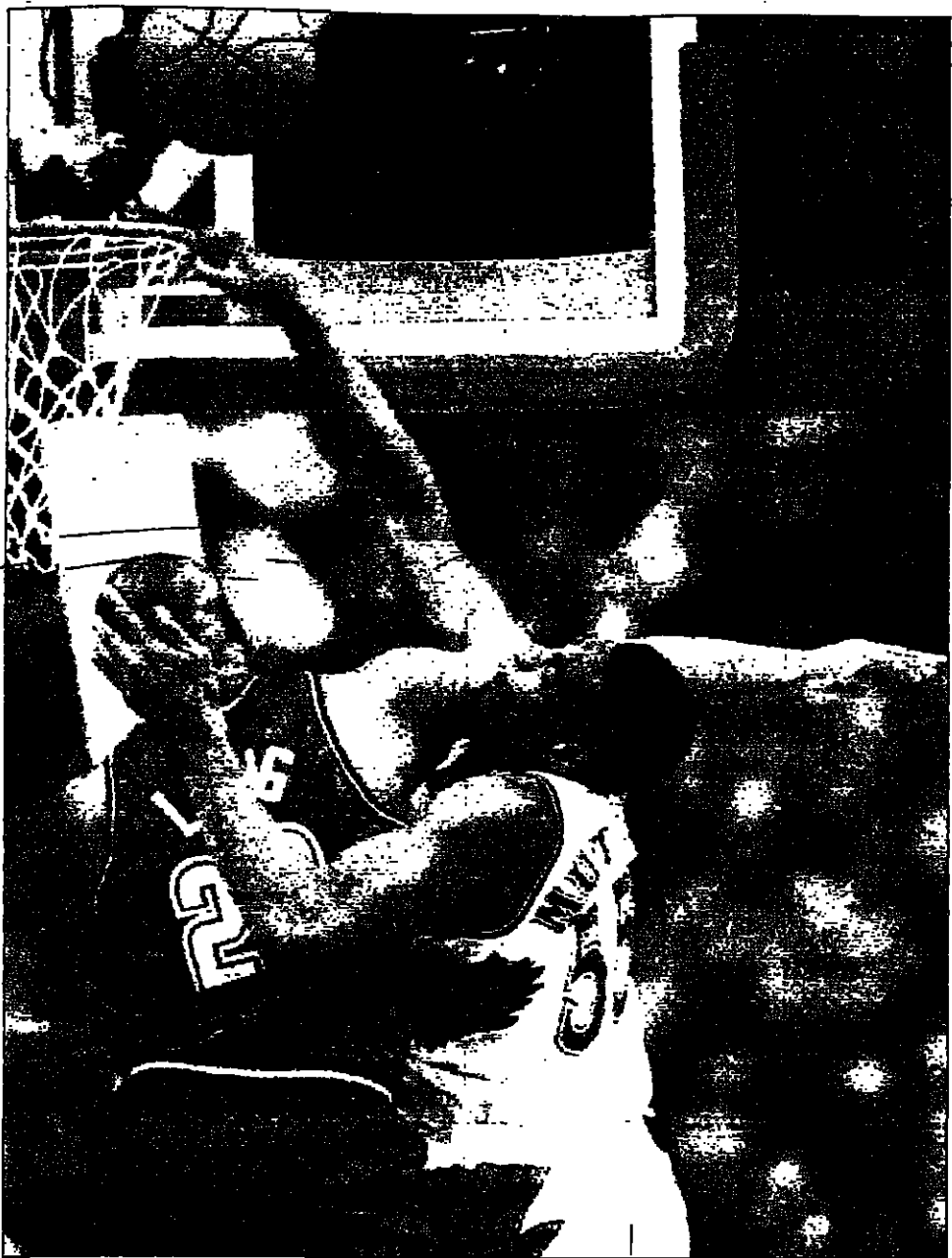
Q8: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q9: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q10: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q11: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10

Q12: 1. At South, vulnerable, 30-10



Atlanta Hawks Dikembe Mutombo (R) is fouled attempting a dunk by the Milwaukee Bucks Andrew Lang in the second quarter of their NBA game at the Omni. Atlanta won 94-71 (Reuters photo)

Pistons beat Lakers in OT

LOS ANGELES (R) — Grant Hill notched his second triple-double of the season and Grant Long made a layup with less than 20 seconds to go to lift the Detroit Pistons to a 100-97 double-overtime win Saturday over the Lakers.

Hill poured in 34 points, grabbed 15 rebounds and doled out a career-high 14 assists for Detroit, and sent the game into overtime by banking in a three-pointer at the buzzer to make it 80-80 at the end of regulation.

Both teams managed just six apiece in the first extra five-minute period. Long's layup with 19.7 seconds left in the second overtime finally put the Pistons (28-9) ahead to stay.

"It was tremendous. I was proud of our guys," said Detroit coach Doug Collins. "Grant Hill was sensational, he's the best player in the game right now. He's the MVP."

"I guess it was the best game of my pro career," Hill said. "We knew our backs were against the wall coming over here. We have a lot of heart and didn't quit. It was fun because my idol Magic Johnson was in the stands. I was beginning to think we would never beat the

Lakers."

In Phoenix, Cedric Ceballos scored 32 points and grabbed nine rebounds as the Phoenix Suns used a big advantage at the foul line for their fourth straight home victory, 105-98 over the New York Knicks.

Phoenix (14-25) shot 85 percent (35-for-41) from the line in winning for the fourth time in its last five games and improving to 10-8 at home. Kevin Johnson and Wesley Person both added 21 points as the Suns won their seventh straight home meeting over the Knicks.

Patrick Ewing had 28 points and 13 rebounds for New York (27-11), who have not won in Phoenix since December 1989.

New York lost two guards left in the third period with a right collarbone injury and Chris Childs left in the first quarter with a mild concussion.

In Boston, Chris Webber scored 25 points, including the go-ahead basket with 33 seconds left, as the Washington Bullets snapped a three-game losing streak with a 112-106 victory over the Boston Celtics.

David Wesley had 22 points

and 14 assists for Boston. Largest lead of the game at 88-77 when Strickland made one free throw with 2:33 remaining in the period.

In Denver, Chris Gatling scored 10 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter as the Dallas Mavericks beat the Denver Nuggets for the third straight time this season, holding on for a 107-104 victory.

Anthony Mason shot 12-for-15 from the free-throw line and recorded 20 points, 17 rebounds and seven assists while Vlade Divac grabbed 12 boards for the Hornets.

In Atlanta, Mookie Blaylock scored 15 in the third quarter and the Atlanta Hawks held the Milwaukee Bucks to just 31 second-half points in posting their ninth straight win, 94-71.

Blaylock had 26 points in all for Atlanta (25-11), winners of 16 straight at home.

At Minnesota, Sam Mitchell and Terry Porter scored six points apiece to fuel a 19-2 second-half run as the Minnesota Timberwolves rallied for their ninth win in 12 games, a 108-93 victory over the Golden State Warriors.

Milan deny reports of illegal payments

MILAN (R) — Italian club AC Milan denied media reports on Saturday that the club had made illegal payments to some of its star players in exchange for the rights to use their image for marketing purposes.

Italian media reported on Saturday that magistrates trying Milan owner and former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi for alleged graft had obtained documents which appeared to detail the payments to top players.

The reports said the documents were obtained by magistrates who are trying Berlusconi for his role in an alleged illegal payment of 10 billion lire (\$6.5 million) to former premier Bettino Craxi through an off-shore company linked to his Fininvest business empire.

Milan managing director Adriano Galliani told reporters that the allegations were ridiculous.

"The real problem is that a club like Milan is always in the news, whatever story is being told, and for the press this story is just too tasty," he said, adding: "Milan have always made legal payments." Most Italian newspapers said on Saturday that the documents detailed a list of leading Milan players, whose names were written in code, with a U.S. dollar figure written next to them.

The money was allegedly paid under the table to the players for the rights to use their images for marketing purposes.

The players named by the papers included captain Franco Baresi, Italy captain Paolo Maldini, Montenegro Dejan Savicevic, former Milan player Jean-Pierre Papin of France, Italy's Stefano Eranio and former Milan winger Gianluigi Lentini, now with Atalanta.

Milan's former trio of Dutch stars, Ruud Gullit, Frank Rijkaard and Marco Van Basten, were also said to be on the list. The reports said the players were not officially under investigation and it was not immediately clear whether the documents would be allowed to be part of the trial, which opened in Milan last November.

Lentini's code name apparently had the biggest figure next to it — \$15 million — while the other figures were between \$300,000 and \$3 million.



Pernilla Wiberg of Sweden clears a gate on her way to take the fastest time in the first run of the women's special slalom World Cup race of Zwiesel, January 19. Austria's Elfi Eder clocked the 2nd fastest time (Reuters photo)

Wiberg continues slalom dominance

ZWIESEL, Germany (R)

Sweden's world champion Pernilla Wiberg continued her dominance of the women's slalom in the Alpine Skiing World Cup with her third victory of the season in the discipline on Sunday.

Wiberg, the overall World Cup leader, defied an icy German piste to notch up her fifth World Cup triumph with an aggregate time of one minute 33.52 seconds, according to unofficial

results.

Austrian Elfi Eder took second with 1:35.21 with Italy's Deborah Compagnoni third in 1:35.60.

The victory helped Wiberg to stretch her lead in the overall world cup rankings to 328 points after third and fourth places in giant slaloms Friday and Saturday. Germany's defending champion Katja Seizinger, who finished seventh in the slalom, stayed second

overall.

As some of her rivals came to grief in the first run, Wiberg showed her class, clocking 46.82 seconds to take a 0.82-second lead over Eder with New Zealand's Claudia Riegler third fastest with 48.21.

The snow was slightly softer for the second run. Wiberg produced another rhythmic run in a storm-

ing 46.70 to clinch victory.

In the first run Slovenia's world bronze medallist Urska Hrovat fell after crossing her skis. Experienced Austrian Anita Wachter and Swiss Karin Roten missed gates.

Riegler lost control of her inner ski at a gate in the second run and crashed out.

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I. 240 sq.m. First Floor Apartment, newly and very luxuriously furnished and equipped. Consists of: Large salon, dining room, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen and a laundry room and three balconies overlooking a private garden. Ideal Hi Class family apartment.
II. 180 sq.m. Independent Ground Floor Apartment. With its private garden, consists of: Salon, dining room, 2 bedrooms and a kitchen. Suitable for a business office, negotiable if interested without furniture. Each equipped with TV set and telephone. Both in the same 2 floor family building, located in the best residential area in Amman. Multi car parking available.
If interested please call 671509

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On top of a hill overlooking beautiful scenery. Four bedrooms (two master), wide parking area, two water reservoirs. For more details please contact owner. Tel: 819427

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Furnished or unfurnished. Located at Jabal Amman/First Circle. Area 180 sq.ms.. Telephone, post office box and storage area. Suitable as living quarter or office premises. Call Cellular tel: 079/42205

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSH

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q. 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AJ QJ83 OKJ78 AJ1054
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ 2♠
What action do you take?
A - Had East passed, you would have employed the Stayman Convention to check on a 4-4 heart fit, intending to commit the hand to game regardless of the response. Now, a cue-bid in the enemy suit serves the same purpose as two clubs would have had there been no interference. Bid three spades.
- Q. 2 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKQJ1075 QAK8 QAK93 48
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ 2♠ 3♠
What action do you take?
A - You have eight tricks in your own hand, partner has responded and your spade suit can play opposite a singleton in partner's hand. Since it is not too much to expect partner to cover two of your losers, jump to four spades.
- Q. 3 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AA6 Q8 QAK954 AKQ88
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ 2♠ 3♠
What action do you take?
A - There's a good chance to make three no trump if partner has a heart stopper. The way to find out is to show your spade control by cue-bidding three spades and waiting for partner's reaction.
- Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AQJ3 QK553 OK AKJ1055
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ 2♠ 3♠
What action do you take?
A - There is nothing you can do without risking a massacre. Bear in mind that partner simply reopened the bidding with two diamonds, an action which doesn't promise much. If North had sound values, the usual course of action would be to double first and then bid diamonds. Pass.
- Q. 5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AJ10 QAKJ8 Q8 AJ10762
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ 2♠ 3♠
What action do you take?
A - Your hand is worth a try for game. Since partner's spade rebid on this auction strongly suggests a six-card suit, and you hold two honors in it, the obvious invitation is a raise to three spades. A rebid of two no trump also has merit.
- Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AA6 QAK954 Q8 AJ10762
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ 2♠ 3♠
What action do you take?
A - You have a fair hand. However, there's nothing you can do for the present other than rebid your original suit. On this auction it doesn't promise more than five cards. Bid two hearts.

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Amman Baccalaureate School
Amman Baccalaureate School invites applications for the 1997/1998 academic year from energetic, qualified and experienced teachers for the following posts:
1. Arabic Teacher for Grades: 9,10,11,12.
2. Maths Teacher for Grades: 9,10,11,12/ Teaching will be in English.
3. Maths Teacher for Grades: 6-8/Teaching will be in Arabic.
4. Science Teacher for Grades: 9,10,11,12/ Teaching will be in English.
5. Social Studies (History Teacher) for Grades: 9,10,11,12/ Teaching will be in English.
6. Music Teacher for Grades: 6-12. Applicants should have a good command of English.
7. CDT Teacher (Craft, Design, Technology) for Grades: 6-12. Applicants should have a good command of English.
* Applicants should in general have good command of English, and have practical experience in the subject area
** TEACHERS WHO HAVE ALREADY APPLIED THIS YEAR NEED NOT APPLY AGAIN.
Application forms may be obtained from the school's reception desk, phone 845572, 847191-2-3, 831502, and should be submitted by Saturday, 25 January, 1997 with a recent photograph.

